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Environmental Issues

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KENYA

UNEP Head Says No Plans To Move Headquarters From Kenya

EA3004114193 Nairobi Kenya Broadcasting Corporation Network in English 1600 GMT 29 Apr 93

[Text] The UNEP [UN Environment Program] executive director Elizabeth Dowdeswell, has assured the Kenya Government that there were no plans from the UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali to move the headquarters of UNEP and Habitat from Nairobi.

Dowdeswell was speaking when she called on the minister for foreign affairs and international cooperation, Mr. Kalonzo Musyoka, in his office. She said the working conditions between Kenya and UNEP were good, but expressed concern on the insecurity of the UN staff working in Kenya following a series of reported banditry involving theft of UNEP vehicles.

In response, Mr. Kalonzo said that although there had been incidents of insecurity in the country as a result of armed people crossing into Kenya, the government had taken effective measures to deal with the situation. Earlier the minister had told the UNEP boss that Kenya had an important role to play in the protection of the environment from destruction.

MOZAMBIQUE

Newly Created Bureau of Standards To Protect Environment

MB2904195293 Maputo Radio Mozambique Network in Portuguese 1730 GMT 29 Apr 93

[Text] The Council of Ministers has created the National Standards Institute. The institution will adopt a set of standards for manufacturing products, providing services, and for imports and exports. The institute will also ensure the protection of the environment.

Environmental Protection Foundation Set Up in Beijing

OW2704093393 Beijing XINHUA in English
0733 GMT 27 Apr 93

[Text] Beijing, April 27 (XINHUA)—The China Environmental Protection Foundation, one of the first such groups in the country, was founded here today.

Qu Geping, chairman of the Environmental Protection Committee of the National People's Congress, was elected president of the foundation's board of directors.

Qu has contributed 100,000 U.S. dollars, which he received as an environmental prize from the United Nations, to the foundation to set up the "Qu Geping Green China Environment Prize."

International Forum Issues Statement on Water Conservation

OW2904155193 Beijing XINHUA in English
1517 GMT 29 Apr 93

[Text] Beijing, April 29 (XINHUA)—Water experts from around the world have called on all countries to adopt an improved water management policy to prevent water shortages from affecting urban populations.

The appeal was made in a statement from the International Workshop on Urban Water Conservation held in the north Chinese port city of Dalian, which was made public and learned here today.

According to the statement, development must be limited to the available urban water resources, policies must promote economic and social well-being, sufficient amounts of safe water for urban populations must be guaranteed and urban water conservation programs must adapt to local circumstances.

The worldwide water shortage crisis is worsening with the population growth and economic development. The urbanization drive has aggravated the situation.

Unless necessary measures are rapidly employed, "the world's expanding urban populations will outstrip the limited supplies of affordable water, costs and pollution will continue to escalate, urban residents will be unnecessarily burdened with additional hardships, the environment will suffer and conflicts over water will intensify," the statement declares.

It is estimated that the world population will reach at least 12 billion by the year 2060, and about 60 percent of the population will live in cities by 2005.

The statement recommends all countries establish institutional responsibility for urban water conservation, enact and enforce relevant laws and regulations and adopt other economic, technological and educational method to deal with this problem.

The workshop, held from 22 to 26 April, was sponsored by the United Nations Development Program, the World Bank and the Ministry of Construction of China. More than 100 Chinese and overseas experts took part.

China is not with abundant water resources. Currently about 300 cities are suffering from water shortages.

Officials from the Ministry of Construction hope to strengthen the exchange and cooperation on water conservation with foreign countries.

China UN Association Expounds Views on Environment

OW1005084193 Beijing XINHUA Domestic Service
in Chinese 0755 GMT 30 Apr 93

[By reporter Li Guorong (2621 0948 2837)]

[Text] New Delhi, 29 Apr (XINHUA)—A delegation of the China UN Association, which is currently attending the Fourth Convention of the Asia-Pacific Regional United Nations Association, took the floor yesterday and today on the current convention's topics—Asian-Pacific economic cooperation, the reform of the United Nations, and UN Associations' role in environmental protection and sustaining development—expounding the China UN Association's views on these three important issues.

The delegates from the China UN Association said: Asian-Pacific economic cooperation not only is possible, it also is necessary. The prospects for Asian-Pacific nations' cooperation in trade, investment, science and technological fields, and infrastructural development, are very good.

The delegates said: China, as a member country of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, staunchly supports strengthening mutual cooperation between Asian-Pacific nations on the principles of respecting diversity, implementing an open policy, equality, mutual benefit, seeking common prosperity, and achieving agreement through consultations. The China UN Association will do its share in this respect.

On reforming the United Nations, the Chinese delegates pointed out: In view of the complexity of the issue and the many problems involved, reform of the United Nations can only be implemented through gradually achieving agreement through consultations. In the current stage, a more desirable way is to set some guiding principles that must be abided by all, as the prerequisites for smooth reform, but not to make a decision on accepting this or that country as a member of the UN Security Council. Reform of the United Nations must be conducive to building a peaceful, stable, fair, and reasonable new international order.

Regarding United Nations Associations' role in environmental protection and sustaining development, the Chinese delegates said: China, as a developing country, has difficulties in supplies of funds, technological areas, and in other areas; however, over the years China has made constant efforts to preserve the ecological balance and protect the environment. The China UN Association will cooperate with Chinese environmental protection organs to assist them in implementing the Chinese Government's environmental protection policies.

The delegates pointed out: Economically developed nations have excessively consumed natural resources in the process of industrialization, creating a large amount of pollutants that have deteriorated the global environment. Therefore, economically and technologically developed nations have greater obligations and responsibilities in protecting the environment. All members of the World

Federation of United Nations Associations should appeal to and urge the governments of these nations to more actively take part in solving global environmental and developmental problems and to fulfill their international obligations and responsibilities in supplying funds and in the transfer of technology.

New Ambassador Assures UN of Greater Environmental Role

*OW0505143893 Beijing XINHUA in English
1351 GMT 5 May 93*

[Text] Nairobi, May 5 (XINHUA)—New Chinese Ambassador to Kenya Chen Pingchu said here today China will try its best to play a more important role in environment protection and provide enough houses to its citizens.

He made the remarks while presenting to Ms. Elizabeth Dowdeswell, executive director of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and officer-in-charge of the United Nations Center for Human Settlements (Habitat), his credentials of full powers as China's permanent representative to the two UN organizations whose headquarters are in Nairobi.

Chen praised the two UN organizations for their cooperation with China in the past decades, adding China is looking forward to more cooperation with them.

Ms. Dowdeswell, who is also under-secretary-general of the United Nations, told the Chinese ambassador that China has contributed a lot to UNDP and Habitat and it has broad prospects in environment protection and human settlements.

Environmental Protection Bureau Launches Campaign

*OW0605123693 Beijing XINHUA in English
1204 GMT 6 May 93*

[Text] Beijing, May 6 (XINHUA)—China today launched a nationwide campaign to select the top 100 women in environmental work in a bid to arouse women's enthusiasm for environmental protection.

The State Environmental Protection Bureau and the all China Women's Federation (ACWF) announced that the

100 women will include those who have made marked achievements in environmental management, science, research, education and propaganda, as well as women in environmental enterprises.

Guan Tao, an official from the ACWF, said that the tendency to neglect environmental protection while engaging in economic development exists in some countries, which has made environmental problems one of the major concerns in the international community.

Guan said that women, due to the special characteristics of their gender and special functions in propagating and developing human society, are more prone to suffer from the worsening environment.

However, she said, women can have a greater share in protecting and improving the environment.

"Chinese women, nearly one-tenth of the world's population, can shoulder responsibilities as heavy as men's and have significant potential in improving the environment," she said.

Guan said that during the past 40-some years, Chinese women have actively attended campaigns promoting planting trees, building irrigation works, exploiting methane and saving energy. In turn, women have achieved much in terms of natural resources protection, waste depletion and improvement of living conditions.

The top 100 women environmentalists will be named in August of this year, when a meeting on Chinese women and the environment is held.

Zhang Kunmin, deputy chief of the State Environmental Protection Bureau, said that China should strengthen environmental protection while developing the economy and promoting reform and opening to the outside world.

"A correct understanding of and dealing with the relationship between economic development and environmental protection is needed at present," Zhang said.

Zhang said that China still relies largely on the traditional mode of massive resources consumption.

"This will not only harm the environment, but also make economic development impossible to sustain," he said.

AUSTRALIA

Canberra Reaffirms Opposition To Lifting Whaling Ban*BK1005074693 Melbourne Radio Australia in English 0500 GMT 10 May 93*

[Text] Australia has reaffirmed its opposition to the lifting of the world ban on commercial whaling. Australia's environment minister, Ros Kelly, says she's confident that the ban won't be overturned during this week's meeting of the International Whaling Commission [IWC] in Japan. Australia supports a French proposal to declare a whale sanctuary in Antarctic waters south of 40 degrees [Latitude].

Japan's delegate to the IWC has criticized western nations for trying to save whales. The director of Japan's Fisheries Agency, (Kazuo Shima), says some environmental groups are forcing their beliefs that no whales should be killed onto others.

Japan is expected to demand at the Tokyo meeting that the six-year-old ban on commercial whaling be lifted so that it can resume hunting Minke whales.

JAPAN

Hokkaido Urges Russia To Halt Nuclear Waste Dumping*OW3004151993 Tokyo KYODO in English 0545 GMT 27 Apr 93*

[Text] Sapporo, April 27 KYODO—The Hokkaido Prefectural Government Tuesday urged Russia to stop immediately the dumping of nuclear waste in the Sea of Japan, prefectural officials said.

The written request, sent to the Russian ambassador in Japan, the Science and Technology Agency and several ministries, also calls for a study of the impact on the maritime environment and the publication of its findings.

It also demands that Russia sets up facilities to dispose of nuclear waste.

In early April, the international environmental organization Greenpeace cited a Russian Government report that the former Soviet Navy had been dumping radioactive material in the seas since 1959.

Two nuclear reactors were reportedly dumped in the Sea of Japan about 700 kilometers north of Fukuoka in 193 and 16 others in the Kara and Barents Seas from 1966 to 1991.

Russian Ambassador Lyudvig Chizhov said Tuesday the Russian Government "thinks seriously" about the matter and is designing a government-supervised program to reduce and eventually halt dumping of radioactive wastes at sea.

The ambassador did not elaborate on when the total ban will be realized, but called for financial and technological support from Japan and other industrialized nations.

Chizhov made the remarks in talks with Sadao Yamahana, chairman of the no. 1 opposition Social Democratic Party (SDP), in response to a protest note Yamahana sent

Russian President Boris Yeltsin on 9 April, calling for an improvement of the situation.

Chizhov said Russia acknowledged that the nuclear waste dumping violated the London convention on sea noncontamination and is willing to put an end to breaching international law.

Earlier this month, Fukui Prefecture and a league of 12 prefectures on the Sea of Japan likewise called on Russia to end nuclear waste dumping.

Tokyo To Seek Data on Russian Nuclear Waste Dumping*OW2804154393 Tokyo KYODO in English 1455 GMT 28 Apr 93*

[Text] Tokyo, April 28 KYODO—Japan will urge Russia next month to provide detailed information on the whereabouts of dumping sites of nuclear submarine reactors and other radioactive waste, government sources said Wednesday [28 April]. Japan will file the request in an expert level meeting in Moscow on 11 and 12 May, the sources said. Experts from the Science and Technology Agency and the Foreign Ministry will represent Japan at the meeting, the sources said.

Japan will demand that Russia provide information on the exact whereabouts of two submarine reactors which the Russian Government said were dumped in the Sea of Japan, as well as on other dumping sites of radioactive waste, they said. The Japanese experts will also seek data on the quantities and type of radioactive substances dumped into the Sea of Japan, they said.

A Russian Government report earlier said the former Soviet Union and Russia continued to dump solid and liquid radioactive waste into the Sea of Japan off the Russian port of Vladivostok and off the Kamchatka Peninsula from 1959 until 1992. But it stopped short of revealing the precise sites of the dumping, they said.

The Japanese experts will also seek Russian consent for conducting joint research in the Sea of Japan and the Sea of Okhotsk to cope with the negative effects of the dumping on the environment, they said. The Japanese side wants to obtain Russian collaboration in setting up a long-term monitoring system on the effects of radioactivity released into the marine environment, they said.

The Russian Government said recently it would continue to jettison radioactive waste at sea even after Japanese Foreign Minister Kabun Muto denounced the practice and demanded an immediate halt to the dumping. The Russian side cited the lack of land-based nuclear waste facilities as the reason for its inability to bring a halt to the maritime dumping.

At the upcoming meeting the Japanese and Russian sides will discuss possible technical cooperation on how to reprocess nuclear waste on land, as well as how to coordinate possible construction of waste reprocessing facilities in Russian territory, they added.

Tokyo, Seoul Agree On Bilateral Ecological Accord

OW3105092393 Tokyo KYODO in English 0812 GMT 31 May 93

[Text] Tokyo, May 31 KYODO—Japan and South Korea have agreed on the final draft of an ecological agreement that calls for exchanges of information on policies and technology and the promotion of joint environmental research, governments sources said Monday [31 May].

Representatives from Tokyo and Seoul will sign the Japan-South Korea agreement on cooperation for environmental preservation in the near future, the sources said.

The agreement calls for joint efforts in dealing with bilateral concerns of air, water, marine and soil pollution as well as cooperation in dealing with the larger issues of preserving biodiversity and halting global warming.

The agreement is expected to play a role in the elimination of the substances that lead to acid rain in Japan, halting pollution of the Sea of Japan—known as the East Sea in Korea—and the protection of migratory birds, the sources said.

The draft calls for cooperation in eliminating air pollution caused by automobile and factory exhausts, water pollution from the waste from homes and factories, and soil pollution caused by the use of pesticides and herbicides in agriculture.

The agreement also calls for cooperation in realizing the goals of the June 1992 earth summit of protecting biodiversity and checking global warming.

The agreement will be implemented through the exchange of information on policies, legislation and technology as well as the exchange of scientists and technicians.

U.S. Study Could Delay Resumed Commercial Whaling

OW2904090493 Tokyo KYODO in English 0852 GMT 29 Apr 93

[Text] Kyoto, April 29 KYODO—The United States has proposed that the impact of environmental change on whales be studied before any resumption of commercial whaling is allowed, sources at the International Whaling Commission (IWC) meeting said Thursday [29 April]. The sources said the proposal is contained in a report prepared by a scientist working for the U.S. Commerce Department and was tabled at a meeting of the IWC Scientific Committee.

The report argues for careful consideration of the effects of environmental changes, including damage to the ozone layer, before any adequate assessment of whale stocks in the Antarctic Ocean can be completed. The proposal will be debated during the May 10 to 14 general meeting of the IWC in the ancient Japanese capital of Kyoto. It is the first time the IWC has met in Japan since 1968. The report proposes that the impact of environmental change should be factored into a newly devised whale management formula for debate at the IWC meeting. The computer-developed formula, known as the Revised Management Procedure (RMP), would enable the IWC to determine quotas for the sustainable harvesting of certain whale

stocks not threatened with extinction. Consideration of the impact of environmental change on whale stocks is not part of the RMP and the proposal is likely to prompt heated debate if the Japanese side sees it as a further obstacle an early resumption of commercial whaling in the Antarctic.

Japan makes no secret of its desire to resume commercial harvesting of minke whales in the Antarctic. The IWC Scientific Committee has estimated there are about 760,000 minke whales in the Antarctic Ocean. Japanese whaling industry representatives say that computer-simulated application of the RMP shows that an average of 2,000 minke whales could be taken annually from the Antarctic region without posing a threat to the species. But the sources said the U.S. report claims that changes such as increases in harmful ultraviolet rays caused by damage to the ozone layer and in carbon dioxide could exert a long-term, irreversible effect on the ecology of the Antarctic region.

The proposal, if accepted, would necessitate a long-term research program including the gathering of data on the influence of environmental change, particularly on baleen whales which include the finback, gray and right whale, and possible consequent alterations in whale stocks.

China Opposes French Proposal for Whaling Sanctuary

OW0805075393 Tokyo KYODO in English 0734 GMT 8 May 93

[Text] Kyoto, May 8 KYODO—China has voiced opposition to a French proposal for a sanctuary banning whaling in much of the Antarctic Ocean, a Chinese Government official said Saturday.

Zhuo Youzhan, government representative to an annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC), told KYODO NEWS SERVICE it is premature to vote on the sanctuary proposal when the IWC scientific committee is split over the issue.

A 39-member IWC general meeting will start Monday for a five-day session.

Of the less than 30 countries attending the Kyoto meeting, a total of six nations, including Japan, Norway and Dominica, oppose the French plan, according to Japanese Government officials.

Under the convention, a decision can only be made if three-fourths majority of those members vote in favor.

"The French initiative contains wide and complicated problems. China's basic stance is a combination of active preservation of whales and their reasonable utilization," Zhuo said.

Last year, France proposed designation of the Antarctic Ocean south of the 40th parallel as a sanctuary, but the discussions were carried over to the 1993 annual meeting.

Agreeing with Japan's position that hunting of nonendangered species be resumed, the Chinese official said China supports a Japanese request that limited coastal whaling, which calls for a quota of 50 minke whales as an emergency relief measure, be approved.

Environmental Groups Urge IWC To Keep Whaling Ban

OW1005024393 Tokyo KYODO in English 0215 GMT 10 May 93

[Text] Kyoto, May 10 KYODO—Two of the world's major environmentalist groups urged the International Whaling Commission (IWC) on Monday [10 May] to maintain the moratorium on commercial whaling.

The appeals from the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and Greenpeace came as the 39-member IWC opened its annual five-day plenary meeting in this ancient Japanese capital to debate the future of whaling.

The WWF and Greenpeace also called on the IWC member nations to support a French proposal to make waters south of 40 degrees south latitude a whale sanctuary.

"The moratorium must remain in place and be supported by the adoption of an antarctic whale sanctuary," said Naoko Funahashi of Greenpeace Japan in a statement.

"Commercial whaling has always depleted whale stocks and always will," she said. "There is only one form of management that will allow depleted whale stocks to recover and prevent others from going into decline, and that is the commercial whaling moratorium."

WWF cetacean officer Cassandra Phillips said at a press conference, "Governments should use this opportunity to take a positive step toward protecting the Antarctic marine ecosystem."

She said the WWF believes the sanctuary would allow the ecosystem to recover to its natural balance.

Whaling nations Japan and Norway have been lobbying for an easing of the ban on commercial whaling while fighting against the French sanctuary initiative.

Norway has said it would resume commercial whaling of minke whales despite the moratorium, citing scientific data that show the minke whale population in the north Atlantic can sustain hunting.

Japan also maintains that small minke whales are numerous enough to allow a limited catch of them.

The IWC imposed the worldwide moratorium on commercial whaling in 1986 but allowed some catches for research and scientific purposes.

Farm Minister's Concern Over Western Attitudes To Whales

OW1005034493 Tokyo KYODO in English 0259 GMT 10 May 93

[Text] Kyoto, May 10 KYODO—Japan's farm minister expressed strong concern Monday [10 May] that some Western nations regard whales as sacred animals that cannot be hunted.

Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Minister Masami Tanabu was speaking at the opening of a five-day annual meeting of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in this ancient Japanese capital.

"This is a matter of great concern," Tanabu said.

Tanabu stressed the need for each country to respect other nations' dietary habits and culture, based on scientific grounds, not emotional or political judgment. Japanese whaling advocates maintain that eating whale meat is a cultural tradition in Japan.

The minister expressed the hope that the 39-member IWC will set a good precedent of using living marine resources in a sustainable manner, in a coming era of global coexistence.

At the 45th annual meeting, Japan will press for the lifting of a ban on commercial whaling. It is the first IWC meeting in Japan since 1968.

Tanabu said at a press conference later he hopes to see a resumption of commercial whaling at this Kyoto meeting as almost all scientific grounds have been presented.

But with many nonwhaling nations joining the IWC, he said he doubts whether the organization is really interested in conserving and rationally using whale resources.

The minister said it is important to manage fisheries for sustainable use of marine resources, not only in the case of whales but also tuna, squid and other fish, based on scientific data while avoiding indiscriminate hunting.

Icelandic Official Urges Withdrawal From Whaling Commission

OW1005101193 Tokyo KYODO in English 0744 GMT 10 May 93

[By Keiko Tatsuta]

[Text] Kyoto, May 10 KYODO—A French proposal for a whale sanctuary in the Antarctic Ocean may face political concessions to make it acceptable to more International Whaling Commission (IWC) members, a French Government delegate indicated Monday.

Brigitte Sifaoui, a French delegate at the IWC's annual meeting, told KYODO NEWS SERVICE that France is considering tabling a proposal for the establishment of a 50-year sanctuary with reviews every decade.

She said the idea is not new since France withdrew the plan last year before discussing the duration and other details due to a lack of time.

Sifaoui said France will explain that the sanctuary is designed to complement the revised management procedure—a formula used to calculate safe whale catch limits—because any resources management procedure can make mistakes.

The sanctuary idea would effectively close the door to the resumption of commercial whaling by Japan.

During the five-day annual meeting which began Monday, Japan is expected to press for the lifting of a ban on commercial whaling, but analysts said it appears unlikely that it will win support needed to overturn the edict.

Voting on proposals designed as binding on members requires a three-fourths majority of countries at the meeting, while a simple majority can pass any resolution to put it on the minutes of the meeting.

More than 300 participants are attending the 45th meeting from some 32 member nations, of which 30 countries have voting rights.

Senegal and Peru are not permitted to vote at the meeting because they have not paid participation fees.

Asked whether France will table its idea as a proposal or a resolution, Sifaoui avoided a direct answer, saying, "It's a mystery."

Sifaoui said a majority of the 39-member commission support the French initiative, suggesting the possibility France will put its idea to the vote as a resolution.

The proposal has only a remote chance of being passed with three-fourths support at the Kyoto meeting as the IWC's subcommittees are split over the issue.

The United States, a leading antiwhaling nation, has indicated that the sanctuary proposal would be held up for more deliberation, and Chinese delegates have cited a lack of discussion on the issue.

Some nations with coasts south of the 40th parallel also indicated they would object to the French proposal because it could infringe on their 200-nautical mile (370-kilometer) economic zones.

Japan contends there is no scientific basis for the sanctuary plan, Japanese Fisheries Agency officials said.

The officials said seven or eight nations have indicated they will oppose the French initiative.

An official of a government delegation from the Netherlands indicated it will be difficult for the French initiative to gain approval at the Kyoto meeting, because the number of its supporters is short of the three-fourths of those at the meeting.

Gudmundur Eiriksson, a legal advisor to Iceland's Foreign Ministry, who is at the meeting as an observer, criticized the U.S. for changing its policy and not supporting a resumption of commercial whaling despite scientific data which he said proves there are enough resources.

He told a press conference he is "disappointed" with the U.S. declaration that it will never support commercial whaling, whether coastal or pelagic.

Gudmundur said he is concerned over the impact of the U.S. policy change on the IWC, describing it as an "anti-environmental approach."

Iceland withdrew from the IWC in June last year, blaming the commission for functioning completely against its original purposes. The IWC's objectives, as stated in the international convention for the regulation of whaling, are to conserve and rationally utilize whale resources, and develop the whaling industry in an orderly fashion.

Either Norway or Japan should leave the IWC, because it is no longer a "reasonable organization," the former IWC commissioner told KYODO NEWS SERVICE.

Norway Calls For New Category for Coastal Whaling

OW1005134493 Tokyo KYODO in English 1136 GMT
10 May 93

[Text] Kyoto, May 10 KYODO—Norway has called for the International Whaling Commission (IWC) to establish a new category for "traditional coastal whaling" of minke whales, a Norwegian Government delegate to an IWC conference here said Monday.

Jan Arvesen, special adviser on polar affairs of the Royal Norwegian Foreign Affairs Ministry, told reporters after the first day of the IWC's annual meeting "Traditional coastal whaling in Norway in many respects has striking similarities to aboriginal and subsistence whaling" that is allowed for Inuit communities in the United States and other countries.

The Norwegian commissioner said the idea was based on five conditions—sustainable harvesting, a limited area and size, license for citizens and coastal states to participate, quotas calculated according to the revised management procedure (RMP), and proper supervision and control.

Arvesen confirmed Oslo's decision last year to resume coastal whaling of minke whales in the North Atlantic Ocean, possibly by this year, based on quotas to be set by the RMP. The whaling will resume even if the idea is not adopted, he said.

He said Norway supports Japan's request for emergency relief allocation of 50 minke whales in its coastal waters, but denied making a similar demand.

Arvesen said that Norway may withdraw from the IWC, but the decision will depend on the outcome of this year's meeting. "After the Kyoto meeting, we must again review our relationship with the IWC," he said.

Solomon Islands Rejoins IWC; Vote Could Be 'Crucial'

OW1205054493 Tokyo KYODO in English 0434 GMT
12 May 93

[Text] Kyoto, May 12 KYODO—The Solomon Islands has rejoined the International Whaling Commission (IWC), boosting the body's membership to 40, an IWC Secretariat spokesman said Wednesday [12 May].

Analysts said the extra vote could be crucial when the conference debates a French proposal for a whale sanctuary in Antarctic waters, as the Solomon Islands is believed to oppose the sanctuary. Japan opposes the sanctuary proposal, which would require the support of three-quarters of the 33 countries with voting rights at the meeting.

A document obtained by KYODO NEWS SERVICE showed the IWC's Technical Committee adopted the French proposal by a vote of 13 to 8 with 10 abstentions on Tuesday, short of the three-quarters support necessary for a binding decision at a plenary session. France, the United States, Britain and Germany were among the countries voting for the sanctuary, while Japan, Norway, Chile, South Korea and four other countries rejected it, the

document said. Brazil, China, Denmark, Russia and six other countries abstained, it said.

The southwest Pacific Melanesian archipelago nation east of Papua New Guinea has a population of just over 300,000 and is a major exporter of fish. Japan is the largest purchaser of Solomon Islands exports.

The spokesman said the Pacific island nation effectively joined the IWC on 10 May, the day the IWC began five days of deliberations at its annual plenary meeting in the ancient Japanese capital of Kyoto. "They are now members," the spokesman said. He said the island nation rejoined on 10 May by depositing an "instrument of adherence" with the U.S. Government in Washington. "Unofficially, we heard about it last night when it was too late to do anything about it. We heard about it officially this morning."

The spokesman said the Solomon Islands has paid its IWC participation fees, allowing it full voting status at the meeting. The three-member Solomon Islands delegation had been at the meeting with observer status.

The Solomon Islands had membership of the IWC from January 1985, but left in June 1990.

IWC To Consider Whale Sanctuary Idea Next Year

OW1405102893 Tokyo KYODO in English 0933 GMT 14 May 93

[By Keiko Tatsuta]

[Text] Kyoto, May 14 KYODO—The International Whaling Commission (IWC) on Friday effectively dashed Japan's wish to resume commercial whaling but agreed to extend discussions on a French sanctuary plan to next year.

Voting on the last day of the five-day 45th annual meeting, IWC member nations adopted by a majority of 19 to 8 a resolution by five member nations such as Switzerland calling for further discussions before taking a final decision on the sanctuary idea next year. Four countries abstained.

The resolution called for further discussions on the French idea to designate Antarctic waters south of the 40th parallel as a sanctuary for whales, to be maintained for 50 years.

Japan voted for the resolution since it will delay the establishment of the sanctuary, which would effectively close the door on Japan's wish to resume commercial whaling.

The commission also decided to continue discussions on a whale management scheme, while keeping a moratorium on commercial whaling in effect.

Pro-whaling and antiwhaling nations clashed over the revised management scheme (RMS), with the antiwhalers turning down by a vote of 18-6 with six abstentions a resolution jointly filed by Japan and Norway calling for completing the management scheme at the IWC's 46th annual meeting to be held in Mexico in May 1994.

Greenpeace International spokesperson Cindy Baxter said the meeting's decision on the RMS and further discussion

on the French proposal for an Antarctic sanctuary represented "a great victory for whales."

Baxter said the decision to delay final discussion on the French proposal signified that the IWC had accepted "the idea in principle."

"It is really good," she said.

"A great step forward...It is a defeat for Norway and Japan.

"The fact that there was absolutely no discussion on even the thought of lifting the moratorium was a great victory for the whales.

"The only hope for Japan's commercial whaling was the RMP and that was defeated with 18 nations opposing it.

"The outstanding question now is whether Norway will announce whether it will recommence whaling."

Japanese IWC delegation head Kazuo Shima said in a closing statement the IWC has now effectively become a body to protect the rights of whales.

"It is deplorable," Shima said. "I'm afraid the RMS will be postponed indefinitely. It's a great pity to see the efforts of the scientists wasted. I don't think the IWC is functioning normally."

Shima said he was dissatisfied to see the French sanctuary proposal still on the IWC agenda for next year.

NORTH KOREA

North Korea Protests Russia's Discarding Radioactive Pollutants

SK3004050693 Pyongyang KCNA in English 0429 GMT 30 Apr 93

[Text] Pyongyang April 30 (KCNA)—The Democratic People's Republic of Korea urged a UN organization to help Russia behave properly, upon the disclosure of the fact that it had thrown away radioactive pollutants in the East Sea of Korea.

Yi Kon-il, chairman of the state environmental committee of the DPRK, sent a letter to Elizabeth Dowdeswell, executive director of the United Nations environment program, in which he said the DPRK government regarded it as an important task for protecting and promoting the health of the people to protect environment and prevent pollution and had consistently directed deep concern and solicitude to environmental protection.

He further said:

It was disclosed recently that the former Soviet Union and present Russia had thrown away radioactive pollutants in secrecy in the East Sea of Korea, the main fishing ground of Korea for a long period, causing deep concern and anger at our competent organs and among our people.

It must be noted that the dumps of nuclear waste are very near from our coast and their harm might affect our country most seriously.

While dumping nuclear pollutants in the coastal waters of our country, Russia kept it in secrecy, not reporting this to the coastal states and competent international organization. This is a grave breach of the rules of the international

environmental program and the UN convention on the law of the sea and the international conventions on the prevention of sea pollution.

We think it desirable that such international organisations as the UN environment program should not lose time in intervening in the problem and bringing home to Russia the urgency of the problem of global pollution caused by nuclear materials and helping it behave properly.

SOUTH KOREA

South Korea Okays Delegation Attending UNDP's Pyongyang Meeting

SK2904073293 Seoul YONHAP in English 0616 GMT 29 Apr 93

[Text] Seoul, April 29 (YONHAP)—The South Korean Government decided Thursday to send a delegation to a Pyongyang meeting of the UN Development Program (UNDP) slated for 5-10 May.

The government gave a nine-member delegation a green light to visit North Korea to attend the third meeting of the UNDP Program Management Committee [PMC] on developing areas near the Tumen River.

The delegation will be led by Kim Yong, director general III of the Economic Planning Board's International Policy Coordination Office. The PMC meeting will be accompanied by a working-level meeting.

"Despite cool ties between Seoul and Pyongyang due to North Korea's announced withdrawal from the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT), the government decided to attend the UNDP meeting because it is a multilateral international meeting, not a private-level meeting to discuss economic cooperation between Seoul and Pyongyang," a National Unification Board spokesman said.

In addition to both Koreas, China, Japan, Russia and Mongolia will send delegations to the meeting.

Ministry Says East Sea Not Polluted by Soviet Nuclear Waste

SK0605080893 Seoul YONHAP in English 0644 GMT 6 May 93

[Text] Seoul, May 6 (YONHAP)—The East Sea is not contaminated with radioactivity despite dumping of nuclear waste in the area by the Soviet Union since 1959, the Science and Technology Ministry said Thursday.

Water and the sea-bed near Ullung Island, fish from the East Sea and Okhotsk Sea, water between Kangnung and Ullung, and the sea-bed between Kojin and Pohang showed no signs of radioactive elements or triple hydrogen, just infinitesimal amounts of cesium and potassium, ministry officials said.

The concentration of cesium-137 was below Japan's annual average, and the amount of potassium-40, a naturally occurring form of radioactivity, was microscopic.

The cesium-137 was probably fallout from nuclear testing by the United States and Soviet Union in the 1960s, the officials said.

The measurements were based on the annual averages of Japanese environment analysis between 1974 and 1989 because Korea still lacks measuring datum on radioactive pollution.

But because the dumping method, volume and type of nuclear waste was unknown and because the Russian Navy is expected to continue disposing of liquid nuclear waste in the sea, many analysts have called for quick government countermeasures.

The ministry will soon initiate joint research with Japan and Russia while setting up a network for checking radioactive marine pollution, the officials said.

South Korea Receives Warning on Trading in Endangered Species

SK0605101993 Seoul YONHAP in English 0942 GMT 6 May 93

[Text] Seoul, May 6 (YONHAP)—Wildlife inspectors warned South Korea about its regular import of tiger bones, saying it would be in violation of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) Seoul hopes to join in coming months, Foreign Ministry officials said Thursday.

Inspectors from the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) met with Foreign, Health and Social Affairs, and other related ministries and raised the problem, the officials said.

South Korea buys about 450kg of tiger bones a year from Taiwan, some two billion U.S. dollars worth, for medicinal use. The CITES standing committee last March named South Korea as one of underground trade nation of endangered species and urged 118 member nations to impose trade sanctions.

The convention restricts trade of more than 200 species, and South Korea hopes to join CITES before September at the latest.

The WWF team is expected to stay for three weeks for on-site inspection of marketplaces.

Meanwhile, CITES Secretary-general Izgrev Topkov is in Seoul to discuss South Korea's membership in the convention.

TAIWAN

Government Reiterates Commitment to Whaling Ban

OW0805124293 Taipei CNA in English 0820 GMT 8 May 93

[Text] Taipei, May 8 (CNA)—A Council of Agriculture (COA) official Saturday [8 May] morning categorically denied reports which hinted that the Republic of China [ROC], though it banned whaling 12 years ago, might have failed to honor its commitment.

"The report is not factual. The nation has committed to the comprehensive ban and will continue to do so," said Li Chien-chuan, director of COA's Fisheries Department.

The Environmental Investigation Agency (EIA), a privately funded British conservation organization, recently

charged that Taiwan had illegally sold 844 metric tons of whale meat to Japan in the past decade.

The ROC banned whaling in July 1981 to comply with the international conservation trend even though Taipei is not a member of the International Whale Committee.

EIA claimed that the seizure of the illegal imports of whale meat to Japan had convinced it that the ban has not been strictly enforced by the ROC Government.

Since 1981, a total of 318 metric tons of frozen whale meat under a special license have been shipped to Japan, where people traditionally have had a taste for whale meat, Li noted. He did stress that all of the whale meat were inventoried before the ban took effect.

Taipei To Inform U.S. of Efforts To Curb Rhino Horn Trade

OW3105112293 Taipei CNA in English 0830 GMT 31 May 93

[Text] Taipei, May 31 (CNA)—The Republic of China [ROC] Government will inform the United States of its efforts in cracking down on rhino horn trade to stave off possible U.S. trade sanctions.

The Council of Agriculture will send the information to the American Institute in Taiwan [AIT]. AIT Taipei Office Director Thomas S. Brooks Friday [29 May] called on Ling Shiang-nung, vice chairman of the council, to express U.S. concern about rhino horn trade in Taiwan.

Reports from Washington indicate that two conservation organizations, the World Wildlife Fund and the National Wildlife Federation, filed a petition last November asking the U.S. Government to impose trade sanctions against Taiwan, Mainland China, South Korea and Yemen for "illegally importing rhino horn."

U.S. Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt is reviewing the case to decide whether Taiwan and the other three have violated U.S. laws. Under a U.S. law, the Pelly Amendment,

the interior minister makes recommendations to the President, who then makes a decision within 60 days on whether or not to direct the Treasury secretary to impose trade sanctions.

The ROC Government in the past few months has confiscated and destroyed smuggled rhino horn. The Board of Foreign Trade [BOFT] suggested that the Council of Agriculture impose stricter rules and destroy all rhino horn stock in this country. To coordinate with international efforts in conservation, the BOFT also called upon international conservation groups to help the ROC join the Washington Convention.

THAILAND

Cabinet Approves Environmental Policy, Work Plans

BK2904081193 Bangkok Radio Thailand Network in English 0000 GMT 29 Apr 93

[Text] The cabinet this week approved in principle the 1994 environmental policy and work plans as proposed by the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Environment. Involved in the project are Ministries of Agriculture and Cooperatives; Interior; Public Health; Education; and Science, Technology, and Environment. All ministries involved are asked to work out detailed plans and better proposals for the 1993-94 budget. The Bureau of the Budget has been asked to coordinate the efforts. Provinces included in the project will also formulate work plans in line with the main project. The Office of the Natural Resources and the Environment has been set up in the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Interior while the Office of Development and Improvement on the Quality of Transportation Environment has been set up in the Office of the Permanent Secretary for Transport and Communications. The Office of the Civil Service Commission and the Bureau of the Budget are asked to provide the budget and manpower for both offices. The cabinet emphasized that environmental work plans for 1994 be based on the government's policy statement and the 7th National Economic and Social Development Plan.

REGIONAL

East Europe Plans To Keep Existing Nuclear Power Plants

BR0705134693 Brussels EURO EAST in English
27 Apr 93 (Tentative)

[Unattributed article: "Eastern Europe Wants To Hang On to Its Nuclear Power Plants"; as released by Brussels Euroscope EIS Database]

[Text] East European countries are keen that nuclear power should continue to cover a prodigious amount of their national energy requirements, but have no plans to build further nuclear installations, according to the Slovak, Slovenian and Croat Environment Ministers, Jozef Zlocha, Miha Jazbinsek and Zdenko Karaka. At the end of a conference sponsored by Austria, on the theme of the state of the environment in Eastern Europe, the Hungarian Secretary of State, Laszlone Tarjan, also expressed reservations about nuclear energy, but had to concede that there were no alternatives at present. Hungary has just one nuclear power station, Paks, 100 km to the south of Budapest. Slovakia has one facility, Bohunice, roughly 120 km from Vienna. The latter installation is arousing as much controversy as the Krsko one in Slovenia among Western experts. Austria, for one, thinks it is obsolete and potentially dangerous. Czech representatives turned down their invitation to the conference. A row has been raging between the Czech Republic and Austria in recent weeks over the Czech decision to finish building the Temelin nuclear plant, 70 km from the Austria border.

The conference participants all applauded the "environmental Marshal Plan" proposed by Austria. The idea is to supply money to help East European countries take steps to protect the environment. The Western technology being sent to these countries should help them to make considerable energy savings. An environment fund, financed on a national and international basis, is due to be created in each country. A total of 24 billion Dollars is supposed to be allocated over six years. The organisers of the "environmental Marshal Plan" are hoping to persuade the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and other international agencies to help fund the programme. It will be unveiled at the end of April in Lucerne, during a meeting of European Environment Ministers.

ALBANIA

Authorities Say Pollution Exceeds 'Permitted Norms'

AU3105090793 Tirana ALEANCA in Albanian
18 May 93 p 3

[B.B. article: "Lac: Between Life and Death"]

[Text] It seems as if the time has come for the Albanian Government to seriously confront the problems of pollution, which have so far been considered future problems for Albania, ruined by the assault of the past. Some 20,000 inhabitants in the industrial town of Lac are endangered to stop breathing in a few years if the copper and superphosphate complex continues working. Some 15,000 m3 sulfur dioxide, emitted every day from the burning in the superphosphate plant create a biblical plague-like cloud in the

Lac sky. As soon as it comes into contact with the noses, lips, or tongues of the citizens, this cloud is automatically turned into acid.

The sanitary authorities admit, not without reservation, that pollution exceeds the norms permitted in the city by five to six times and those permitted in the plant working environments by 10 to 20 times. The year 1992, when both plants were shut due to a shortage of raw materials, constitutes a flourishing year for vegetation and agriculture in general. Residents admit that the dry cough still dominated over the silence of the chimneys, but the incomes of the peasants in raising livestock and vegetables were as no other year before. However, 1,500 workers of both plants prefer employment to their health, and this tendency of theirs to fight with themselves is hopeless and a short-term means. The Copper Melting Plant created in 1979 is near bankruptcy. The technology used there has been out of use in Europe since 1975. According to an engineer, an approximate amount of \$170 million is needed to renovate the whole copper processing system in Albania. Meanwhile, the Lac plant has lost its market years ago. The decline in international copper prices has made the cost of producing the Albanian copper higher than that of the market price. The present price for a ton of copper is \$1,700, while the plant maintains about 800 tonnes of copper in stock. The plant specialists are complaining that the government is not able to open the way to foreign investments, though the copper reserves are large. An IMF fund project has been left in who knows what offices, states a 43 year-old engineer who, for 45 German marks, is throwing up from his damaged stomach every day. Many others, just like him, are living only for the bread of tomorrow. The two plants constitute the main source of income for the majority of Lac inhabitants. Anyway, it is too late now. For many of the inhabitants left in Lac as an enclave of socialism, it is too late to start another life far away from the polluted industrial town. It is also becoming increasingly difficult even for the little children who sell cigarettes and chocolates along the national highway connecting Shkoder with Tirana. Two weeks ago the pope himself greeted them from an armored window, but in the other days ... the passengers prefer not to stop at all near vendors, thus closing the car windows and blocking the nose with an handkerchief to avoid the filthy smell of sulfur.

BULGARIA

Minister Wants Urgent Meeting With Romania on Pollution

AU2904193393 Sofia BTA in English 1838 GMT
29 Apr 93

[Text] Sofia, April 29 (BTA)—On 28 April Environment Minister Valentin Bosevski asked the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to convey his request for an urgent meeting with his Romanian counterpart to discuss the situation in the Ruse-Giurgiu area and the other Danubian towns. The request was occasioned by the growing public anxiety in those areas, the Environment Ministry said in a press release. A team of experts has been formed which, as from the beginning of next week, will assist the pollution control work of the regional environmental protection centre in Ruse.

It was reported that the concentration of carbolic acid in the air over Silistra (northeastern Bulgaria, across the Danube from Calafat, Romania) today was thrice the medically acceptable limits.

Environment Minister Reports on Danube Air Pollution

*AU0805165693 Sofia BTA in English
1230 GMT 7 May 93*

[Text] Sofia, May 7 (BTA)—Minister of Environment Valentin Bosevski today told parliament he would shortly meet his Romanian counterpart in Bucharest to discuss the environmental problems of the Danubian towns. "I will insist on an open and productive discussion of managerial decisions about the technological state of industrial enterprises on the banks of the Danube, as well as of questions of the countries' responsibility for the control of their industries," Bosevski said.

The minister of the environment today answered questions by MPs sitting for Silistra, where several cases of pollution with gas had been registered recently. Ana Milenkova said air pollution started in 1977 when the metallurgical works in the Romanian town of Calarasi (opposite Silistra) was brought on stream. Ms. Milenkova asked about the measures taken by Bulgaria to equalize air pollution control standards. She stressed the incidence of certain diseases had increased due to the high toxic content of Silistra's air.

Ruse is another Danubian town which frequently reports pollution with gas which is believed to be emitted by the chemical works in Giurgiu, Romania.

In his answer the minister of the environment confirmed that pollution with phenol, hydrogen sulphide and other aerosols had become more frequent in Silistra in the last three years. In 1992 the ministry, through its regional inspectorate, inspected thoroughly all possible polluters in Silistra. It was found that their emissions were insignificant and contained no phenols and hydrogen sulphide. Quoting unofficial statistics, Mr. Bosevski said the metallurgical works in Calarasi had two coke batteries, a blast furnace for cast iron and electric furnaces for steel, which polluted the air with phenols. The two monitoring posts operating in Silistra from 1990 measured high one-time levels of all toxic substances but the average monthly pollution levels were normal. Phenol has been the major pollutant for several years, the hydrogen sulphide content of the air increased in April. The maximum hydrogen sulphide content of the air exceeded the admissible level two to three times, while the phenol content exceeded it up to five times.

Environmental problems will not be solved through consultations with Romania and use of identical equipment and methods, Bosevski said. He sees a solution in attracting the attention of the European Community to

Bulgaria-Romania environmental problems. Bosevski recalled that acting on an official Bulgarian request, the EC pledged to grant ECU [European Currency Units] 300,000 for an examination of technological problems and for the drafting of a four-stage general plan for reconstruction of polluters with Bulgaria's and Romania's assent. Companies specialized in technological reconstruction and waste treatment installations will also take part in the project.

CZECH REPUBLIC

Environmental Agreement on 'Black Triangle' Signed

*AU0405150993 Prague CTK in English
1430 GMT 30 Apr 93*

[Text] Prague April 30 (CTK)—A three-party agreement between the Czech Republic, Poland and Germany regarding the Black Triangle project was signed at a meeting of European environment ministers in Luzern, Switzerland, Czech Minister of the Environment Frantisek Benda told a press conference today.

The Black Triangle is a border area of the three neighboring countries, heavily polluted by emissions from the nearby thermal power plants. The project is to provide it environmental assistance.

Under the agreement, the three countries committed themselves to back investment in specific projects. A coordination center of the project was established in Usti nad Labem, North Bohemia, and the agreement stipulates financial contribution to its operation by the individual countries, Benda said.

Benda specified that the agreement would be followed by twelve environmental projects.

An agreement on cooperation in environmental protection between the Czech Republic and Norway was signed at Luzern meeting, too, Benda said.

HUNGARY

Environmental Cooperation Planned With Turkey

*LD2604172093 Budapest MTI in English
1554 GMT 26 Apr 93*

[Text] Budapest, April 26 (MTI)—Hungary and Turkey made a general environmental cooperation agreement in Budapest today.

The agreement, to be broken down into annual work programmes, covers environmental legislation, privatization, economic regulation, urban and rural environmental issues, combatting air pollution, sewage treatment, delivering hazardous waste, protecting geological assets, and developing tourism.

The agreement was signed by the two countries' state secretaries in charge.

Headed by State Secretary Ozger Akad, the Turkish delegation today met Sandor Papp, deputy chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Environmental Protection.

Papp told them about the committee's work, and Hungary's bill on environmental protection.

Nuclear Plant Wants Russia to Continue Taking Waste

*LD0605193793 Budapest MTI in English
1822 GMT 6 May 93*

[Text] Budapest, May 6 (MTI)—Paks nuclear power plant managers hope that this year Russia will continue to accept nuclear waste from Soviet-type projects, including Hungary's one nuclear plant, Balazs Kovats, plant information chief, told MTI today.

Hungarian nuclear waste is going through Ukraine, also hit by a recent Russian ban on importation of nuclear waste. For this year, Hungary and Ukraine have a valid nuclear waste transport agreement, which can be cancelled with six-months notice.

In 1992, Russia continued to receive Hungarian nuclear waste under a special permit. The last consignment went in February this year. Since Hungarian-Russian talks on this year's deliveries have already started, early agreement is hoped for.

Should talks end in failure, waste container capacity at Paks will be sufficient until the first quarter of 1995. The Hungarian side has made preparations to expand its storage capacities.

ROMANIA

Bulgarian Environment Minister Ends Working Visit to Romania

*AU1305070593 Sofia BTA in English
1803 GMT 12 May 93*

[Text] Sofia, May 12 (BTA)—Minister of the Environment Valentin Bosevski today returned from a working visit to Romania, where he discussed the ecological situation in the Danubian region and the implementation of the bilateral convention on environmental protection signed and ratified by the two parliaments.

The officials determined the status of the intergovernmental commission on the convention's implementation.

The sides agreed to work out common regional standards and harmonize the national standards of transboundary pollution.

The sides agreed to set up joint expert teams to make technology assessments. The experts will have free access to chemical works and technological lines. The Romanian side will grant the Bulgarian experts access to projects to build waste treatment facilities at the plants in Turnu Magurele, Giurgiu, and Calarasi. The Romanian Ministry of Water Economy, Forestry and Environmental Protection agreed to let Bulgarian regional environmental inspectors into neighbouring regions on the Romanian territory.

Mr. Bosevski suggested that the Bulgarian and Romanian Environment Ministries move for ratification in the two parliaments of the 1979 bilateral convention on transboundary pollution and the 1991 convention on transboundary impact on the environment.

ARGENTINA

Tierra del Fuego Research Station To Monitor Atmosphere*PY0805025993 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish
1137 GMT 7 May 93*

[Text] Buenos Aires, 7 May (TELAM)—The National Weather Service reported today that a scientific station for global atmospheric monitoring (VAG), which is being built near Fuego in Ushuaia, will go into service in 1994.

The scientific project is being built according to an agreement signed between the Air Force, the National Weather Service, and the government of Tierra del Fuego.

The VAG will be used for control and research into all atmospheric variables, which include global warming and the hole in the ozone layer.

The station will also be used for checking atmospheric chlorofluorocarbon levels, the chemistry of precipitation, the greenhouse effect, radioactive isotopes, solar radiation, and ultraviolet waves.

The scientific station is being built at a strategic point, as it is in the area of the hole in the ozone layer, which will help to determine the variations in and extent of this atmospheric phenomenon.

CUBA

Havana Notes Handling of Radioactive Waste*FL0305150193 Havana Radio Progreso Network
in Spanish 1100 GMT 3 May 93*

[Commentary by Eduardo Gonzalez on the "First Hour" program]

[Text] I believe radio active waste is and will be, in the long term, the biggest challenge that the peaceful use of the atom presents for scientists. Radioactive waste generally does not lose the ability to emit radiation over many thousands of years; during that time, it must be stored in conditions where it does not threaten mankind or the environment. Even though we still do not have nuclear fuel or large quantities of radioactive products, in Cuba we use and produce radiopharmaceuticals and sources of radiation for the medical, agricultural, and industrial fields. This is the reason we are visiting today the modern radioactive waste treatment plant, which centralizes the collection and handling of these materials. We were received by Nibaldo Garcia, chief engineer of the plant, whom we asked: What happens to radioactive waste in our country?

[Begin Garcia recording] The Cuban world program does not allow dumping of any type of radioactive substance into the environment. That is the reason the plant was built. Its main functions include: centralized collection of radioactive waste and of unused sealed sources generated by the entities that use this type of material; treatment of this waste; temporary storage of treated waste and unused sealed sources; and development of the scientific-technical base required for the proper execution of the national policy concerning waste disposal.

With this plant, the Cuban nuclear program has a safety support for the protection of mankind and the environment. [end recording]

The Cuban system for the treatment of radioactive waste is undoubtedly the best in the Third World and is at the level of that in many of the developed countries. This plant is the object of the admiration of visiting foreign experts and the pride of our specialists.

Radiological safety is another significant achievement of the Revolution.

PERU

Expert Warns of Extensive Amazon Region Deforestation*PY0505231193 Lima EL PERUANO in Spanish
23 Apr 93 pp A6-A7*

[Article by Leonidas Canchaya]

[Excerpts] Marcelino Mayuash Asanki, professor at the Alto Mayo Linguistics Institute, has stated that if the deforestation process in the Amazon region continues at its present rate of destruction, in less than 30 years the most extensive region of Peru, and the most important lung of the world [el pulmon mas importante del mundo], will become a gigantic and inhospitable desert.

Mayuash Asanki reported that so far 2 million square kilometers have been leveled, representing one fifth of our Amazonian region. "Each day 500 square kilometers of tropical forests are eliminated," he said.

He pointed out that those responsible for this ecological disaster were petroleum companies, drug traffickers, timber dealers, and terrorists, especially through the contamination of rivers through the use of acids such as ether, kerosene, and mercury, which seriously poison the water.

Speaking on behalf of the 455 native tribes of Ashaninka, Culina, Piro, Matsiguenga, Chayahuita, Jebero, Amara-kaeri, Andoque, Bora, Huitoto, Ocaina, Aguaruna, Huambisa, Shipibo, Cottibo, Yagua, Kichwa, Secoya, Ticuna, Cholon, Taushio, and Cocama Cocamilla peoples, Mayuash Asanki demanded resolute government action to prevent the development of the desert.

"The Amazon is a mosaic made up of 800 human groups and their corresponding cultures, and this ethnic and cultural pluralism cannot be disregarded or denied respect if we want a realistic view of our jungle region." [passage omitted]

The professor added that the depredation continues not only through the poisoning of river waters, but also through the destruction of forests, the indiscriminate cutting of wood, and the premeditated burning of the vegetation.

"These problems have been created by past governments, by politicians who were in office then, in complicity with bad agricultural officials from the regions of Loreto, Ucayali, San Martin, and Madre de Dios—the same ones who have allowed the deforestation of the Amazon plains through the leveling and burning of forests, the establishment of illegal industries, and the proliferation of operations that seriously jeopardize the ecological balance of this important region of the planet," he said. [passage omitted]

INDIA

U.S. Accused of Trying To Hijack Biodiversity Convention

BK0605095793 *Delhi PATRIOT in English*
24 Apr 93 p 5

[Text] The United States wants to "hijack" the biodiversity convention to use it against the Third World which is the source of all biodiversity as well as the source of all biological wealth, according to renowned environmentalist Dr. Vandana Shiva, reports UNI [UNITED NEWS OF INDIA].

Dr. Shiva said the U.S., which had refused to sign the biodiversity convention at the Earth Summit in Rio last year "because of the pressure of the biotechnology industry" of that country, had now agreed to do so because of pressure from the same industry.

"The Clinton administration has been working with a group of industry and industry-oriented environmental representatives to work out an interpretation of the biodiversity convention that would protect the U.S. biotechnology industry's interests and totally undo the objectives of the convention which was a result of two years of global negotiations", she said.

The convention—concluded at the historic Rio Summit—was a response to increasing international concern about the loss of species.

"The most important perversion" in the new U.S. interpretation of the convention was the shift from concern for the protection of biodiversity to the protection of the biotechnology industry, she alleged.

According to Dr. Shiva, the U.S. concern was for the protection of intellectual property rights of corporations whose "intellectual property" was built on free exploitation of Third World knowledge rather than the protection of indigenous knowledge of local communities.

She said indigenous communities of the Third World know their problems can be solved by retaining and regaining control over their local resources and their indigenous knowledge systems. Losing control and ownership over their resources and innovations was the cause of their problems and not the solution.

"Indigenous resources and indigenous knowledge for indigenous solution is the grassroots option emerging throughout India. These movements and communities will not be coerced by the U.S. and its corporations to hand over their biological and cultural heritage for a few dollars".

She alleged that the U.S. administration was trying to violate the human rights of millions of farmers, pastoralists and herbalists.

Dr. Shiva said the private companies in biotechnology had benefitted from free access to public sector research systems and from Third World indigenous knowledge.

"The research products for which they claim intellectual property protection are not entirely the result of their investments but the investment of centuries of creativity of peasant and tribal societies, and decades of investment of public sector research.

The entire world community especially grassroots groups engaged in biodiversity conservation recognise that monopoly rights in the form of intellectual property rights would totally undermine the rights of local communities in the south.

Scientists Develop Sorbents To Counter Nuclear Waste

BK1205092393 *Delhi INDIAN EXPRESS in English*
3 May 93 p 11

[Text] New Delhi—Scientists in the Department of Atomic Energy (DAE) have developed new sorbents for elimination of radionuclides like Cs-137 and Sr-90, which are of major concern as far as environment protection from different types of liquid nuclear wastes is concerned.

Manufacture of these sorbents on a large scale has been undertaken to create an indigenous source for meeting the plant scale operations.

Macroreticular resins loaded with copper hexa-cyanoferate, resorcinol-formaldehyde polycondensate resins, hydrous oxides of titanium and iron, phenolic resins with chelating functional groups and synthetic zeolites are among the new sorbents which have shown great potential for plant scale application.

Another new process has been developed for the treatment of resin wastes from nuclear power stations, chemical processing plants and spent fuel storage bays. Under this process, chemical decomposition of the organic matter in the resin is done by wet oxidation. The organic material is fully converted into an inorganic solution amenable for treatment and safe disposal thereby achieving a high overall reduction in the volume of the waste.

The DAE's R and D [research and development] programme has been focussing its efforts on developing new processes and techniques for waste management with the objective of further reducing the activity content in the effluents discharged into the environment by nuclear facilities. Many studies have already been tested on a pilot scale and are now being adopted for plant scale application.

Meanwhile, the first of the DAE's plants for immobilising high active nuclear wastes into glass form has started operating at the Tarapur atomic power plant. Two more such plants are now under construction at Trombay and Kalpakkam, according to the annual report of the department.

The main thrust of DAE's research and development programme on radioactive waste management has been on the management of high active wastes arising from the reprocessing stage. These wastes require safe storage over very long periods.

Simultaneously, the DAE has also initiated work on setting up of deep underground disposal sites for the immobilised high active wastes.

At all the atomic power plants the radioactive elements present in the liquid and gaseous wastes discharged by the nuclear facilities are being immobilised in solid materials of proven stability and leach resistance and are safely contained in disposal sites which are out of contact with the biosphere. These disposal sites are designed and built on a multibarrier principle to prevent the reinduction of radionuclides into the eco-system.

IRAN

Environment Development Accord Signed With UNDP

LD2604165993 Tehran IRNA in English 1436 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] Tehran, April 26, IRNA—Iran and the United Nations Development Plan (UNDP) have signed a project document for environment substantial development, announced the UN information centre here today.

UNDP is to contribute dlr. 300,000 to the project while the World Bank will contribute the staff inputs for the project's technical cooperation.

The planning and budget organization is helping with the strategy preparation and will use the results to include environmentally sound perspectives in the second five-year development plan.

The agreement was signed by Vice-President and head of the Environment Protection Center Dr. Hadi Manafi and UNDP President Coordinator in Iran Michael Schulenburg.

Over 100 Iranian experts have worked for three months to prepare the 1,000-page research study in 20 socio-economic subjects related to environment and substantial development.

Iran is among the few countries in the world which have prepared their national strategy for environment and substantial development by relying on its own experts and knowhow, said the UN center.

The study, it added, is a direct follow-up to the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992.

"With this study the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran not only addresses its national concerns for the improvement of the environment but also places itself in the forefront of international efforts to contribute to substantial development," the center said.

Meanwhile, a round-table talk on national strategy for environment and substantial development will be held at Pardisan Natural Park, 4-5 May, to deliberate on how the outputs of the project can be used for the second five-year development plan, currently under preparation.

NEPAL

Indian Poachers Blamed for Deaths of Protected Animals

BK1005041393 Hong Kong AFP in English 1640 GMT 9 May 93

[Text] KATHMANDU, May 9 (AFP)—Nepal's prime minister has made a surprise visit to a national park where 79 one-horned rhinoceros and 20 Bengal tigers were reportedly killed by poachers, the forestry ministry said Sunday.

One press report linked park officials to the killings.

But surprised wildlife officials told Prime Minister Girija Prasad Koirala when he landed by helicopter Friday at Chitaur National Park and Wildlife Preservation Centre that only 14 rhinos had been killed in recent months, to obtain their horns.

However, a local weekly newspaper, Nepali Patra, insisted the slaughter was much more extensive while another newspaper alleged that park officials were collaborating.

Quoting a security official at the park, about 120 kilometres (75 miles) south of here, the newspaper insisted that 79 rhinos and 20 Bengal tigers have been hunted down recently for their horns and other body parts.

Both animals are considered to be on the verge of extinction.

Nepali Patra said Indian poachers, aided by local people, had been able to infiltrate the reserve although some 8,000 army, forestry department and other personnel are responsible for guarding it.

The Deshantar newspaper meanwhile reported that rhinoceros horn can sell for as much as 60,000 dollars a kilogram (about 27,000 dollars per pound) when sold in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore or Europe.

It added that demand for tiger bones and skin for use in medicinal preparations was high in those countries.

Because of the high prices, "poachers are taking great risks to hunt down the striped tigers and the rhinos," Deshanter said, adding that some guards and officials had been bribed into cooperation.

Speaking to AFP, a senior Chitaur official insisted the higher number of rhino deaths, and the reported tiger killings, were inaccurate, and cited the same number of rhino deaths—14—as was given the prime minister.

"The latest records indicate there are about 400 rhinos and 200 Bengal tigers across the country," the official said.

It was not clear if Koirala accepted the lower figure offered by officials, but he called on them to be vigilant in protecting the animals.

In response to a request by the officials, the prime minister said he would make more vehicles available to give them greater range in the vast conservation area, a forestry department official said.

RUSSIA

Radiation Panel Aides Accused of Dereliction

PM2804121993 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA
in Russian 27 Apr 93 First Edition p 4

["Viewpoint" article by Fedor Gosporyan, chairman of Supreme Soviet Radiation Safety Subcommittee, under "Chernobyl" rubric: "We Should Take the 'Graves' and Abolish Them"]

[Text] At state level the chief organization designed to tackle the work of surmounting the consequences of a disaster is Russia's Goskomchernobyl [State Committee on Social Protection of the Citizens and Rehabilitation of the Territories Damaged by Chernobyl and Other Regional Catastrophies]. A special law setting up the state committee was adopted 19 September 1990. It was then that its location was decided upon—Bryansk, the center of the oblast worst hit by the radiation disaster.

But neither Goskomchernobyl Chairman S. Voloshchuk himself nor the colleagues he selected had any wish to leave their cozy nests in the capital, unless for a brief official trip abroad. At first they found refuge in the White House, and then they took over some of the luxurious apartments on Staraya Ploshchad which used to belong to the CPSU Central Committee.

Instead of organizing real work on surmounting the consequences of the disaster and protecting the casualties, the Goskomchernobyl chairman and some of his deputies began almost at once preparing "emergency airfields" for themselves in the form of commercial structures, and soon moved successfully into the posts of leaders of these structures. At the same time, in organizing the structures, generous use was made of funds allocated by the state out of the budget.

Of course, these men vested with state power were unable, and indeed did not wish, to monitor the use of the money and the material resources being sent to the oblasts which had suffered. It was no coincidence that many targets envisaged in the State Program of Urgent Measures To Eliminate the Consequences of the Radiation Disaster in 1991-1992 were wrecked. The prosecutor's office exposed numerous instances of the squandering of state funds. It can confidently be stated that many more similar instances went unrevealed.

A year ago the incapable and negligent leader of Goskomchernobyl was sacked. Hope began to dawn that something in the state committee would change with the appointment of V. Voznyak as the new chairman. Time has shown, however, that Vasilii Yakovlevich is almost indistinguishable from his predecessor. The bureaucratized structure is continuing to function in its former key.

The Russian State Committee for Statistics recently submitted the official document "On Progress in Fulfilling the State Program To Eliminate the Consequences of the Accident at the Chernobyl AES [Nuclear Electric Power Station] and Other Radiation Pollution in 1992." The annual target for moving residents from Bryansk Oblast was 11.6 percent met, including 8.8 percent in terms of moving them out of the obligatory evacuation zone.

Instead of 40,000 people being moved to clean regions, 4,632 were—almost half as many as the previous year.

There are scientists who faithfully serve the nuclear department and Goskomchernobyl and who at once leaped to the defense of the bankrupt structure. Whereupon the "Proposals for the Practical Realization of the Concept of the Population's Residence in Regions Affected by the Accident at the Chernobyl AES, Under Conditions of the Rehabilitation and Restoration Stage Now Under Way" saw the light of day. They were drawn up by a working group of the Russian Scientific Commission on Radiation Protection.

The "Proposals..." maintain that there is no direct link between soil pollution and the dose received by the population. This is not so, to put it mildly. There is a complex dependence here, but the link is very direct. The process of "rapid natural self-cleansing" is of a highly debatable nature. The role of the "protective measures that are being taken" is still less significant here, for they are being implemented with a lack of vigor and effectiveness. The claim that, thanks to these two processes, there is an increasing gap between soil pollution and received dosage would not fool anyone.

The following claim is also greatly stretching a point: "At present, even in Bryansk Oblast rayons with a high level of primary pollution (more than 15 and even more than 40 curies per square kilometer), reliably measured doses are relatively small and are continuing to diminish rapidly." A group of Supreme Soviet deputies and experts was convinced of this after visiting western rayons of Bryansk Oblast at the end of last year. In the village of Staryy Vyshkov a counter showed 1,130 microroentgen per hour, i.e. 100 times higher than the background value, in the yard of a house where a family with young children lives. Maybe it was 200 times higher a year ago?

The authors of the "Proposals..." try to prove that the additional irradiation of the population in 1991 and in subsequent years, which gives an average annual effective equivalent dose of radiation of no more than one millizivert [as translated], is perfectly permissible and requires no intervention. And yet the individual dose of the victims is still not known and, to all appearances, nobody has any intention of seriously setting about determining it.

The essence of the "Proposals..." boils down to not carrying out any more compulsory mass removals—in short, revoking the law's demands. The wording is bare to the point of cynicism: "To allow only voluntary resettlements as a means of reducing stresses and sociopsychological tension, while at the same time not encouraging it by either economic or administrative methods."

No comment, as the saying goes.

What does the proposed switch from granting allowances and paying compensation to preferential conditions of socioeconomic life mean? In practice it means just one thing—a desire to take away the crumbs of the meager alms for those dispossessed by Chernobyl.

Press Conference Marks 7th Anniversary of Chernobyl

MK2804090693 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian, No. 11, 27 Apr 93 p 7 (Signed to Press 26 Apr)

[Vera Orlova report published in "Outlook" column: "Communists Are To Blame for Chernobyl Tragedy, But Then We Have Something To Share"]

[Text] At present this preliminary conclusion can be made—the Chernobyl catastrophe was a result not of the actions of just one individual but the "fallacy of the entire system." It is the fault of "the country's political leaders" that "the principles of nuclear plant construction were violated." This was stated at a press conference on the eve of the seventh anniversary of the Chernobyl accident by Boris Uvarov, head of an investigating team under the general prosecutor and chief prosecutor in the criminal case on instances of abuse and negligence by officials that occurred during the cleanup of the Chernobyl accident.

He noted that this case, initiated at the request of the USSR Supreme Soviet following numerous publications several years ago, has never stopped. It was simply transferred from the Union prosecutor's office to the Russian prosecutor's office. At present the interrogation of CPSU Central Committee Politburo members is nearing completion. Nikolay Ryzhkov, Yegor Ligachev, Vladimir Dolgikh, and others have already been interrogated. Therefore a final conclusion may soon be made.

True, it is hard to tell how this decision will compare with the one whereby the direct culprits—the station personnel—are already in prison. Boris Uvarov said that they did indeed take "incorrect actions" at the Chernobyl nuclear power station....

Yet another piece of news was announced at the press conference. Vasily Voznyak, chairman of the State Committee on the Chernobyl Accident [Goskomchernobyl], "taking advantage of the presence of foreign journalists," called for international cooperation in cleanup activities following accidents at nuclear facilities. He believes that thanks to Chernobyl, cutting-edge technologies have begun to be actively developed in Russia. In the first place, in the production of "clean" agricultural produce. Therefore "we could share our experience...."

Up to now, however, our experience has not been sought—quite the contrary. Thus, specialists of Goskomchernobyl and the Russian Public Health Ministry are conducting a measurement program on affected territories jointly with officials from the FRG Federal Reactor Security Ministry. Instances of large-scale charity supplies of state-of-the-art medical diagnostic equipment are generally well known. It is far less well known, however (for the most part only among specialists), that these instruments can hardly be operated properly by local physicians.

Incidentally, we also urgently need the assistance of foreign doctors, primarily from the United States, who have for decades been studying the impact of radiation on the human organism. But apparently these data are being kept secret, and it is also difficult to talk about openness on the part of our own medical experts. Incidence of disease on "Chernobyl" tracts is ever increasing, but the official explanation relates this to the general worsening of our

populace's health. Talking about radiation-related ecological disorders, one cannot count on reliable results until some 20 years later. When genetic mutations are involved, it is recommended to think in terms of several generations. The only thing that the doctors are talking about with confidence is that the Chernobyl residents have suffered serious psychological consequences.

Chernobyl, Tomsk-7 Accidents Compared

PM2704200593 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 27 Apr 93 First Edition p 4

[Article by Andrey Illesh: "Nuclear Spring: What Do Chernobyl and Tomsk-7 Have in Common?"; passages between slantlines published in boldface type]

[Text] Seven years after the disaster of the century more and more brushstrokes are being added to the canvas of the consequences, whereas at Tomsk-7 they continue to divide society into those who can know the truth and those for whom it is no use at all.

Sochi: How They "Built up Their Health"

Those who were on vacation in Sochi in spring and summer 1986 still do not know for sure whether the radioactive discharge from the fourth power unit [of the Chernobyl station] reached the Black Sea coast. Unfortunately, it did.

"On 2 May the regional health and epidemiological station told us it was necessary to measure the gamma background radiation hourly," L. Gevorgyan, chief of the Sochi City Health and Epidemiological Station radiological laboratory, said. "Our usual background is 10 microroentgens per hour. But on the morning of 4 May the gamma background rose to 250 microroentgens. There was an urgent meeting of the emergencies committee at the city soviet executive committee to discuss what to do. Fearing panic, they decided not to tell the populace anything. Indeed the information we were receiving at the time was secret."

But they did take some urgent measures in Sochi. Enterprises were told not to do any work in the open. Under the guise of bacteriological dangers, precautions were tightened up in relation to the transportation and sale of food products. Sprinklers began to tour the city...

The gamma background remained at an average level of 250 microroentgens for approximately a week, and in some places, where precipitation did not run away, it even rose as high as 600 during that period. It peaked on 7 May, whereupon the background level gradually fell. It was not until April this year that our correspondent A. Aderekhin obtained these data.

Now tea. The time came to harvest it, but many plantations were contaminated. The health and epidemiological station prohibited school children from participating in the tea harvest. And adults had to wear special clothing in the places that were most heavily contaminated with radiation. Incidentally that season's tea was eventually sold after long discussions at ministerial level, and we drank it "for our health"...

While saying that the state did not give a damn about its citizens' health, one must make it clear that fortunately the radiation dose that Sochi's inhabitants and vacationers received in summer 1986 did not result in tragedy. Nevertheless, there was a degree of danger, of course, especially for children. For instance, at that time it was well worthwhile not getting caught in the rain which could have been carrying radionuclides with it. However, people did not have the remotest idea about these elementary precautions and the flow of vacationers was not stemmed either.

Only three years after the catastrophe was a careful survey made of the gamma background radiation of the entire Azov and Black Sea coasts. In just one season of checks in Sochi alone specialists discovered about 150 sectors where radioactivity rose to hundreds of microroentgens per hour. These spots no longer exist because decontamination has been carried out and the resort is seeing in another season. However, despite the fact that the Chernobyl tragedy has seemingly been well studied, society will be learning the lessons from it for years and years to come.

We Have Not Learned To Tell the Whole Truth in Siberia Either

Commenting on the accident that occurred 6 April at the Siberian Chemical Combine at Tomsk-7, ranking officials warned us that there was no way the incident was on a par with Chernobyl—the leak of radioactivity to the outside world from the container which exploded was incomparably less than that which occurred seven years ago in reactor No. 4 at the Chernobyl Nuclear Electric Power Station. And therefore the consequences are far less significant. From the point of view of “pure physics” this argument is undoubtedly correct. But nevertheless there is something extremely dangerous which links these two incidents: Lies. To be more precise, the failure to speak out which accompanied the disaster of the century is now being practised by senior comrades in Siberia as well. The aim both then and now is the same: To reassure us, not to alarm people. Stress only the annoyance of the incident and soon everything will be forgotten. The less information and the fewer conclusions there are, the fewer complaints will be leveled at nuclear industry workers.

Here is an official document. (Admittedly, something has restrained the officials from slapping the all too familiar “secret” stamp on the top right-hand corner of the first page). The paper is addressed to the Supreme Soviet Committee for Questions of Ecology and the Rational Use of Natural Resources. It is signed by the chairman of the State Committee for Affairs of Civil Defense, Emergency Situations, and the Elimination of Natural Disasters. And so, S. Shoyga writes to V. Vorfolomeyev:

“I hereby submit a report of the radiation situation in the vicinity of the accident at the Siberian Chemical Combine (Tomsk-7). The report states that the radiation situation ... may be considered safe for the population's survival and vital activity in the vicinity of the accident, but it requires appropriate monitoring.

The Commission expresses its concern at the fact that:

—the distribution of radioactivity in the vicinity of the accident is of an unequal, patchy nature with radiation

levels in some locations (“hot locations”) reaching several hundred microroentgens per hour and even more;

two inhabited localities fall within the contaminated zone: Georgiyevka and Chernaya Rechka...”

And now the main point:

“It should also be noted that the Commission has ascertained the following but did not note it in the report in order to soften public opinion:

—yet again, as in the Chernobyl disaster, information about the accident both at local level and to the center was relayed with considerable delay by the Russian Ministry of Atomic Energy, which could have led to grave consequences;

—the slowness with which measures were taken to localize the consequences of the disaster resulted in radioactive contamination spreading onto the Tomsk-Samus road and to contamination of the inhabited locality of Samus;

—the absence in the vicinity of the Siberian Chemical Combine (within a 30-km zone) of an automatic radiation monitoring system and a local accident warning system.”

A number of conclusions follow, in which, however, there is not even a hint of regret that once again the public has been made a fool of and that we have all been deemed unworthy of receiving full and truthful information about the incident. What will the people do? Make a bit of a fuss and forget about it. And what about the Ministry of Atomic Energy, which, while “carrying out appropriate work on the contaminated territories,” will again secretly continue to manufacture weapons-grade plutonium, process waste from nuclear electric power stations, and so on? We are not supposed to know how and with what degree of risk all these activities are being undertaken: It is a secret. In the present case (unlike Chernobyl) we are dealing with a military secret. And there's more. In no official document will you find an answer to the simple question: How many accidents have occurred at Tomsk-7 prior to this April? Just as you will never find out the exact number of “irregular situations” (the phrase used by nuclear scientists) at other secret nuclear production facilities in dozens of other closed cities.

However, there are some visible actions which the military-industrial complex is sure to undertake: It will ask for more money. To clear up the consequences. And the essentials of the matter will long be shrouded in “secrecy.” Until a proper juridical base is established in the country ensuring the civilized functioning of the nuclear cycle and a genuinely independent structure for monitoring this cycle is set up.

State Nuclear Inspectorate Head on Tomsk Accident

LD2904082893 Moscow *ITAR-TASS World Service*
in Russian 1437 GMT 28 Apr 93

[By *ITAR-TASS* correspondent Veronika Romanenkova]

[Text] Moscow, 28 Apr—The reason for the accident at the Siberian chemical combine (Tomsk-7) “goes far beyond the mistakes of operator Fomenko”—“new technology

had been fixed into the old production facility (commissioned at the end of the fifties—beginning of the sixties).” However, there is no protective casing at the combine, and no list of accidents and the relevant recommendations to personnel. This was stated today at a news conference by Yuriy Vishnevskiy, chairman of Russia’s State Nuclear Inspectorate.

On the instructions of the government, the State Nuclear Inspectorate took part in investigating the causes of the accident. Although the study of all the circumstances is continuing, instructions have already been given to the director of the chemical combine to prohibit the technological process of isolating plutonium from being carried out until the investigation has ended.

Formerly in the USSR and now in Russia, extradepartmental monitoring did not extend to enterprises of the nuclear fuel cycle (Tomsk-7, Krasnoyarsk-26, and others), Yuriy Vishnevskiy noted. “The Ministry of Nuclear Energy is engaged in sabotaging last year’s instruction from the Russian president” which ordered the introduction of this type of inspectorate, the specialist believes. He expressed the hope that this issue will be resolved in the near future. Inspection of nuclear fuel enterprises and an assessment of the safety levels at them and the formulation of additional safety measures will be completed before 1 December 1993.

For the moment it remains for one to rely on the luck which, according to Aleksandr Dmitriyev, the head of administration of the State Nuclear Inspectorate, played a decisive role at Tomsk-7—the explosion took place during the lunch break when there was no one in the area; a steady wind blew for a few days which did not carry the radioactive substances to populated locations; and then snow fell, which pinned the releases to the ground.

Kursk AES Reactor Plan Faces ‘Ecological Evaluation’

PM0405094793 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA
in Russian 30 Apr 93 First Edition p 9

[Unattributed report under the “Nuclear Power Industry” rubric: “We Act. Then We Justify Our Action. Then We Appeal to the Population”]

[Text] Kursk—The Kursk Nuclear Electric Power Station [AES] Press Service has announced through the local press that a major conference has been held here on questions of financing and progress in the construction of the fifth power unit at the station. The population has been informed that the new power unit is due to be commissioned no later than 1995.

The decision to continue construction, of course, was made at a higher level: It is envisaged in the government decree dated 28 December 1992. However, the conference discussed the “specifics,” without which nothing is done. Especially not such major matters as increasing the capacity of a power station which provides energy to the mining and enrichment and metallurgical combines in the region of the Kursk magnetic anomaly. So far questions of the timetable and volumes had been left open, as had the main question—the source of finance for the construction project. Now it has been decided that credits will be

granted and the loan repaid from the nuclear power station’s profits. Let us note that this will cost around 18 billion rubles this year alone. This, it need not be said, does not please the AES leadership very much.

But for the local population, which also suffered plenty from the evils of Chernobyl, the main question of course remains that of the security of the “nuclear foundling” left here amid the Chernozem region. N. Klyuyev, chairman of the oblast soviet commission to monitor the operation of the Kursk AES and the elimination of the aftermath of the Chernobyl AES accident on the oblast’s territory, recently got in touch with the ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA bureau. In essence what he said was this: The power unit under construction still “has received no ecological evaluation.” The commission is also worried that the AES management has begun to gradually shirk the solution of the oblast’s problems, is trying to separate from the station the social infrastructure facilities of Kurchatov, the nuclear power workers’ town, and the rayon, and is slow to resolve questions of the transfer of citizens from the station’s safety zone [sanitarnaya zona]...

I do not know whether this news will satisfy deputies, but first the conference “decided to analyze progress in the fulfillment of earlier decisions.”

Problems in Nuclear Facilities’ Safety Discussed

MK3004092093 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA
in Russian 30 Apr 93 p 2

[Andrey Vaganov report under “Safety” rubric: “Russian Gosatomnadzor Thwarted. Russian Federation Defense Ministry and Atomic Energy Ministry Are Sabotaging Creation of Federal Control System at Their Nuclear Facilities”]

[Text] The long list of radiation disasters, accidents, and incidents (Semipalatinsk, Kyshtym, Chernobyl, Leningrad AES [Nuclear Electric Power Station], and finally, Tomsk-7) has already taught the law-abiding Russian population to ask themselves just one question: Where will the next one blow up?

All citizens can do each time is to demand after the event the formation of some nondepartmental organ “to investigate the reasons, eliminate the consequences, and prevent in the future....” Meanwhile an organization which is by definition supposed to do this—the Russian Federal Nuclear and Radiation Safety Inspectorate (the Russian Gosatomnadzor [State Committee for the Supervision of Safe Working Practices in the Nuclear Power Industry])—has been in existence for almost two years.

In the former USSR nondepartmental control and supervision did not extend to enterprises in the nuclear fuel cycle (to which, incidentally, the chemical combine at Tomsk-7 belongs) or to nuclear weapons complex facilities. Under the Russian Federation president’s directive N 224-rp of 9 April 1993, work to introduce nondepartmental supervision at nuclear fuel cycle enterprises must be speeded up, and inspection of these enterprises and assessment of their safety level accompanied by recommendations on additional safety measures must be completed before 1 December of this year.

"The Russian Gosatomnadzor is ready and willing to carry out the president's instruction," Gosatomnadzor Deputy Chairman Yuriy Zubkov states. "But we have lost a whole year in pointless correspondence with the Russian Federation Defense Ministry, responding to 'who the hell are you?' The upshot is that the Defense Ministry still categorically refuses to admit our specialists into its radiation-hazardous facilities."

The formal motives for refusing admittance are old and banal: secret work, concern over keeping state secrets, and the unwillingness to widen the circle of people who have been let in on these same state secrets. These, however, are apparently not the real reasons.

The Russian Federation Atomic Energy Ministry, having reluctantly given the go-ahead for an inspection of five of its nuclear fuel cycle combines, paid for this by closing two of them. Naturally, this prospect does not suit the military department.

The Russian Gosatomnadzor believes that the main resistance to the federal supervision organs comes from the apparatus of the Defense Ministry's 12th Main Directorate (whose chief is General Maslin), which deals with all questions associated with the planning, construction, and operation of nuclear weapons facilities.

"Consequently we cannot yet say anything good or bad about the nuclear weapons complex," Russian Gosatomnadzor Chairman Yuriy Vishnevskiy stresses. "There is currently no state supervision of this complex' enterprises."

Gosatomnadzor, however, soberly assesses its own powers. According to international experts' assessments, 90 percent of security is built in at the scientific research and experimental design stage and only 5 percent depends on supervisory organs' work. Add to this the 40 percent shortfall of specialists, the poor level of technical equipment for inspections, and wages that are three to five times lower than wages at enterprises where supervision is being carried out. All this, according to Vishnevskiy, makes it impossible to guarantee that inspectors will simply not be bought off.

Minister Sums Up Results of World Environmental Conference

PM1005151193 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian
5 May 93 First Edition p 3

[Report by Yuriy Kovalenko: "Western Credits Will Help Russia To Solve Its Environmental Problems"]

[Text] Lucerne, Paris—What a striking contrast there is between the colossal sum we were prepared to spend on our defense against communism and the pitiful amount we wish to allocate to save ourselves from the consequences of environmental pollution, Danish Environment Minister Svend Auken angrily exclaimed. But it is a question of life and death!

In the opinion of his German colleague Klaus Toepfer, the ecological factor and a "healthy" environment play a key role in the fact that average life expectancy in West Europe is eight years longer than in East Europe.

Certainly, those at the "Environment for Europe" conference—in which some 50 ministers from the Old World, the United States, and Australia took part—who were expecting hundreds of millions or even billions of dollars to be made instantly available to urgently patch up "holes" in the environment were disappointed. This is true of several East European delegations in particular.

Nevertheless, the conference, which was held in the Swiss city of Lucerne with the active involvement of the Council of Europe and the World Bank, fulfilled its task. It acted as a catalyst for future changes in environmental policy, in the way projects are financed, and, perhaps most important of all, in public awareness, Russian Environment Minister Viktor Danilov-Danilyan stressed in a conversation with me. The political declaration adopted at the conference in Lucerne creates a basis for guaranteed credit from the EC, the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, and so on. In particular, it approved a program of action to protect the environment in Central and East Europe.

What is the situation with regard to solving Russia's environmental problems with the help of international institutions and our Western partners? What are our hopes for the near future?

"We and the World Bank have virtually completed work to give Russia an environmental loan—initially in the region of \$1 million," V. Danilov-Danilyan said. "It will be used to finance several environmental programs, concerning Lake Baykal in particular, and also to supply conservation organs with the latest communications and data processing facilities."

"Another loan of hundreds of millions of dollars given to Russia by the World Bank," the minister continued, "will be used to prevent losses of casing-head petroleum gas, which are very considerable in our country. We are talking about the Tyumen oil fields. It is planned to build a trans-Urals gas pipeline to carry this gas to the European part of Russia."

"We are also working on an oil project with the World Bank," V. Danilov-Danilyan said, "which envisages allocating resources to rehabilitate disused oil wells, of which we have tens of thousands."

"Germany is our largest single donor-country," V. Danilov-Danilyan stressed. "It recently allocated 1 million marks to Russia to be spent on a joint project to monitor environmentally dangerous installations, and we will start with our nuclear power plants. In addition, we are successfully cooperating with Norway, Sweden, and Finland. Incidentally, Oslo financed a joint Russian-Norwegian expedition last summer, which studied radiation pollution in the Barents and Kara Seas. We are working with Norway and Finland on the problems of modernizing the main sources of pollution on the Kola Peninsula: the 'Pechenganikel' and 'Severonikel' Combines."

"The conference in Lucerne," V. Danilov-Danilyan said in conclusion, "discussed the serious question of introducing a tax on carbon dioxide emissions. These emissions are the main factor in global warming, which will have a multitude of negative consequences. So we feel this tax is necessary."

Russia plans to introduce it this year and use the revenue to protect the environment."

USSR, Japan Both Allegedly Dumped Mustard Gas at Sea

PM1305085393 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 12 May 93 First Edition p 7

[Unattributed report under "Rumors" rubric: "USSR Might Have Sunk Mustard Gas in Sea of Japan"]

[Text] The Japanese Government would like to receive an explanation from Russia with regard to data to the effect that during the forties the USSR sank approximately 30,000 tonnes of mustard gas in various containers in the Sea of Japan. This was stated at a news conference in Tokyo yesterday by Yoshiro Mori, the country's minister of international trade and industry, ITAR-TASS reports.

He pointed out that the data on the sinking of mustard gas have not yet been confirmed. But if they tally with reality, Mori said, this undoubtedly "poses a serious problem"—just like the question of the Soviet Union's dumping of radioactive waste and spent nuclear reactors in the Sea of Japan. The minister reported that his government is formulating its position with due regard for the information which it hopes to receive in this regard from Russia.

Citing Russian official sources, the Tokyo press has published a report that in the forties, after the end of World War II, the USSR dumped in the Sea of Japan a considerable number of bombs, shells, and containers containing, in toto, approximately 30,000 tonnes of liquid mustard gas at the end of its useful life. Data on the sites of these burials have not yet been cited. According to specialists' forecasts, the casings of these munitions could be destroyed by corrosion in just a few years' time.

Experts of the Japanese National Defense Agency have reported, the newspaper ASAHI writes, that mustard gas easily solidifies at a temperature below 15 degrees, is heavier than water, and on contact with water gradually turns into a substance with low toxicity. Therefore experts believe that the zone of contamination with this toxin, even if the casings of the munitions and the containers are destroyed, will be quite local. Account here is also taken of the fact that the current international ban on sea burials of toxins does not extend to toxins dumped in the water before 1985.

According to information available, the Japanese armed forces have also sunk mustard gas containers in Tokyo Bay, Beppu Bay, and other regions in various years, but the details of these operations are still not known.

Two Hundred Billion Rubles To Be Spent on Radioactive Waste Burial

LD1305134893 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1324 GMT 13 May 93

[Text] Moscow May 13 TASS—By ITAR-TASS:

Russia will spend more than 200 billion roubles in prices of mid-1992 for the burial of radioactive waste under the state programme for the treatment of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel, for their utilisation and burial, the newspaper MOSCOW NEWS reports on Thursday.

The programme referred to the parliament by the Russian Ministry of Nuclear Energy is calculated up to the year 2005. It will be financed from a special fund at the Russian Government, the article says. Funds from the budget are allocated only for defence purposes and for the treatment of radioactive waste accumulated by 1990. Other parts of the programme must be financed by enterprises manufacturing commodities.

The biggest part of allocations will be channelled for the recultivation of land and reservoirs contaminated during military activity. A much larger volume of nuclear waste has accumulated in the production of nuclear arms than in the nuclear power industry for peaceful purpose. For instance, radioactivity accumulated as a result of the production of weapon-grade plutonium at Mayak Amalgamation, Chelyabinsk-65, surpasses one billion curie.

Under the programme, special attention is given to the development of methods for the burial of spent nuclear fuel and glassified highly active blocks in stable geological structures. The setting up of regional and local entombments for the waste of transport reactors and nuclear power plants is to be concluded by 2000 and 2005. The burial of highly active waste in deep-lying structures is attempted. But the problem will be resolved in the years 2000-2020.

An exemplary entombment at the Bilibino nuclear power plant and an underground laboratory at the Mayak production amalgamation are to be built by 1998. The first section of an underground storage of radioactive waste is planned to be built at Mayak amalgamation by the year 2005.

WESTERN REGION

Belarus: Birth Defects Up 18 Percent Seven Years After Chernobyl

WS2604095893 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in Belarusian 0300 GMT 26 Apr 93

[Text] Today is a sad anniversary in the Belarusian national history—it has been seven years since the Chernobyl tragedy. It is hard to tell how much more sorrow it will bring and how long we will feel its repercussions. Some 70 percent of the Republic's territory bears the marks of the terrible disaster, the most awful of which is the threat to human health. It has been officially acknowledged that the rate of defects in newborn babies has increased by 18 percent, and the number of oncological diseases has grown by almost threefold. There has been a shortage of medicine and vitamins; the situation is complicated, to say the least. A lot has been done in order to eliminate the aftermath of the accident, and the issue has always received the government's utmost attention. More than 130,000 residents of the contaminated areas were moved to new domiciles between 1986 and 1992. New villages were built for the migrants; the law on the social protection for the victims of the accident was drafted. Belarus needs more means and hope for the better.

Belarus: State Official Comments on Environmental Quality Control

*WS1205102393 Minsk CHYRVONAYA ZMENA
in Belarusian 30 Apr 93 p 2*

[Interview with Vasil Mikalaeovich Dzemidovich, Belarusian prosecutor on ecological issues, by newspaper correspondent A. Alshanski: "We Are Threatened by a Chemical Chernobyl"; date and place not given—first paragraph is editorial introduction]

[Text] Ecological issues have never been as acute in Belarus as they are now. We are virtually on the brink of the abyss. The Republic is filled with poisonous industrial waste contaminating the environment. For decades, we kept silent about our calamities. The Belarusian Prosecutor's Office was not a perfect guardian of ecological laws, not to mention other laws. Currently, the Government is setting things in motion: New legislation on protecting the environment is being developed. Two years ago, the Belarusian Prosecutor's Office on Protecting Nature was created. We are interviewing V.M. Dzemidovich, one of its officers.

Alshanski: Vasil Mikalaeovich, all of us understand that the Belarusian people are going through a critical period. We are both hostages of Chernobyl and of the approaching chemical catastrophe. Can you clarify the general state of nature protection in Belarus? In connection with this, what are your main tasks?

Dzemidovich: We are primarily trying to eliminate the legal vacuum in this sphere. The Law of the Republic of Belarus "On Protection of Environment" and other normative acts have been adopted. Work on ecological issues is continuing. For Belarus, the issues of environmental protection are truly urgent and demand attention. They are of equal importance with economic issues. Each year, our industry produces more than 1 million tonnes of poisonous waste. Only 21.5 percent of this poisonous waste is neutralized or reprocessed. The remainder is buried in the soil, and can easily seep into the water supply. We urgently need the law on industrial waste; otherwise, we will poison ourselves. We must build reprocessing centers, just as all the civilized countries do. Belarus should not become a junkyard.

Currently, various enterprises pay high penalties for exceeding the limits of industrial pollution. For industrial giants, these costs are like a drop in the ocean. In addition, these penalties are not always applied toward environmental protection. Every year we register from 25 to 30 accidents connected with disastrous industrial pollution. Environmental recovery costs amount to millions of rubles [R]. The legislation should be changed immediately.

In the space of two years, our office issued more than 20 orders and 13 protests. Forty-seven statements were forwarded to different institutions. Fifteen criminal cases were investigated. Suits filed at economic and people's courts have extracted more than R2 million from the pockets of law violators.

Alshanski: Please, agree with me: These figures do not compensate the great costs of environmental recovery. Do

you have enough financial resources to control the implementation of ecological laws and prevent illegal acts against our environment?

Dzemidovich: If we had enough, I would not talk about our financial difficulties. Three (Belarusian, Gomel, and Mogilev) interregional ecological prosecutor's offices have tiny staffs. The Belarusian Prosecutor's Office staffed with about ten officers, while the remaining offices (in Gomel and Mogilev) have less than that. Work is abundant, so it is difficult for us to cope with it. By the way, the idea of creating the prosecutor's office for ecological issues in Belarus had made its way with great difficulty. I have to say that our neighboring countries are more fortunate in this respect: Russia has 61 ecological prosecutor's offices, and Ukraine has 11. Each Polish voivodship in Poland and each state in the United States has its own ecological prosecutor's office. You see, it is not possible to investigate the case within the framework of a rayon prosecutor's office: one has to obtain a lot of experts' findings, has to conduct ecological surveys, and so on. Furthermore, you must take into account the fact that the local organs of the State Committee for Ecological Issues are under the supervision of local executive councils that are always inclined to hush up all criminal cases in this sphere.

Alshanski: Vasil Mikalaeovich, what territories are under your special control?

Dzemidovich: There are a lot of them. For example, more than ten cities: Minsk, Grodno, Novopolotsk, Soligorsk, Orsha, Volkovysk, and Borisov. Each oblast has a lot of ecologically dangerous enterprises, primarily connected with the fuel-energetic complexes. We need to urgently protect the Svisloch, Berezina, Neman, Druts, Prypyat rivers and the lakes—Naroch, Palik, and Svityaz.

Alshanski: It is very difficult to talk about cross-border ecological conflicts. How does the CIS solve this problem?

Dzemidovich: At first, we had a lot of problems. The beginning was difficult. Later, a session of the CIS ecological departments was held. A step-by-step approach to the issue was fruitful. We have signed several agreements in the sphere of legal responsibility, nature protection, and others. Our state has signed European state, so it has its own duties. All people want to avoid ecological cataclysms, and try to be cooperative.

Ukraine: Chernobyl-Related Illnesses Defy Earlier Scientific Notions

*WS0605143493 Kiev KYIVSKA PRAVDA
in Ukrainian 20 Apr 93 pp 1, 3*

[Article by Viktor Ponomarenko, deputy minister of health protection: "This Is a Top Priority Task"]

[Excerpts] Some 4.5 million people have suffered from the Chernobyl catastrophe. The "nuclear tornado" covered 13 oblasts, 119 rayons, and more than 2,300 populated areas. [passage omitted]

When we first faced the problems of the effect of radiation on human health, we banked completely on the international experience in this field, which showed that a lot of diseases caused by nuclear radiation manifest themselves long after exposure, while genetic changes became evident

not sooner than the second or the third generation. Chernobyl introduced substantial "amendments" to these traditional notions, and caused world physicians to view the medical consequences of large nuclear disasters differently. What were these new notions introduced by the Chernobyl accident?

The first changes started to show as early as 1989 and 1990. A number of our institutes—the Institutes of Otolaryngology, Urology, Nephrology, and Epidemiology discovered changes in the cellular level of human organisms. These changes resulted in deficiencies of the immune system. In 1991 and 1992 we obtained irrefutable evidence that there exists a direct link between radiation and changes in the qualitative characteristics of blood. With the average disease rate of 0.8 persons for every 10,000 people, those who participated in the liquidation of the aftermath of the accident showed a rate that was twice as high.

Last year, our ministry reported a dramatic increase in children's thyroid cancer. Today we are positive that this is a direct consequence of the accident. This disease peaked in 1990, when it exceeded eight average rates and affected 25 children in comparison to three cases in the previous year. This contradicted the pattern of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Some 90,000 children "collected" the aggregate dose of 0.15 to 1.5 grays, while about 12,500 children were exposed to more than two grays. [unit as published] This means we can anticipate further deterioration in human health. [passage omitted]

Ukraine: UK Firms Involved in Plans for New Chernobyl Sarcophagus

PM2604164093 London *THE DAILY TELEGRAPH*
in English 26 Apr 93 p 7

[Roger Highfield report: "British firms Plan Chernobyl Shroud"]

[Text] A double-skinned "sarcophagus" large enough to house tower Bridge has been proposed by a joint British and Ukrainian consortium to protect the crumbling tomb around Chernobyl, site of the world's worst nuclear accident seven years ago today.

The building around Reactor Four must be shrouded as it falls far short of what is needed to contain the radioactive remains.

The "sarcophagus" proposal has been entered in the Ukrainian government's competition, which closes today. The consortium is made up of AEA Technology, the scientific and engineering services business; Design Group Partnership, consulting engineers; and NTT KORO [expansion unknown], the Ukrainian design organisation.

After the accident, the broken remains of the nuclear plant were rapidly enclosed in a sarcophagus.

Poor construction, and some 1,000 square metres of holes, mean that it has to be resealed, prompting the Ukrainian government to invite ideas from around the world.

The site is too radioactive for construction workers and the scale is too great for robots. The British-Ukrainian consortium proposes to build the containment some distance

from the reactor's remains and then to move it over the reactor, where it would be sealed in place.

It would have a galvanized steel frame and aluminium double skin, measure 250 metres by 100 metres and weigh some 16,000 tons.

Once the shroud is in place, decommissioning teams could begin dismantling and packing the remains of the reactor for storage and disposal.

Ukraine: Environmental Protection Minister Discusses START-I

WS1305113193 Kiev *KHRESHCHATYK* in Ukrainian
28 Apr 93 p 1

[UKRINFORM report: "On the START-I Treaty"]

[Text] Ukraine needs \$3 billion to become a nonnuclear state. This is the opinion of Ukrainian Environmental Protection Minister Yuriy Kostenko, who spoke at a press conference on the results of the session of the special working group engaged in the preparation of START-I for ratification.

Scientists of Ukrainian military and civil research institutes, experts of the military-industrial complex, along with people's deputies have discussed the scientific-technical aspect of nuclear disarmament. Pros and cons of both nuclear and nonnuclear stature of Ukraine were discussed, and a divergence of views was noted. The issues of the use of the components for missile warheads in the national economy, as well as the issues of the dismantling of missile silo launchers caused heated discussions. In addition, the clauses in START-I, which was signed by the USSR and the United States 10 years ago, do not correspond to the present reality, and Ukraine will have to bear heavy additional financial losses.

The journalists were informed that the ratification of START-I is closely connected with the Ukrainian military doctrine which had not yet been adopted in connection with the continuing discussion of nuclear disarmament. However, if the nuclear missiles are taken off combat duty, issues of their supervision and ecological security will arise.

Yuriy Kostenko said that Ukraine is a nuclear state, and until now it has not violated any of the international juridical norms. But it is under constant pressure from other countries. In addition, Russia has stated that in the event Ukraine does not sign the treaty on nonproliferation of nuclear arms, Russia will stop deliveries of nuclear fuel for Ukrainian nuclear power stations and will refuse it technical aid. Yuriy Kostenko stated that France and Canada support Russia's demands.

Russia has no rights regarding the nuclear warheads, but can carry out technical supervision of strategic nuclear arms. Kostenko denied the information alleging that nuclear weapons in Ukraine are not secure. The warranty time period for storing the nuclear warheads in Ukraine has not yet expired, he stressed.

Ukraine: Greens Party Claims Nuclear Arms Will Be Ukraine's Downfall

*WS1305113793 Kiev KHRESHCHATYK in Ukrainian
28 Apr 93 p 6*

[Unattributed report: "Greens Advocate Nuclear-Free Ukraine"]

[Text] "The nuclear shield will crush us with its weight." This phrase from an open letter written by the Ukrainian Party of Greens [PZU] to Supreme Soviet deputies at the end of 1992 was pronounced at the news conference entitled "Nuclear Arms and Nuclear Power in Ukraine." The news conference was dedicated to the seventh anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant accident.

After recalling the aftermath of the unprecedented tragedy that confounded the whole world seven years ago, PZU leaders stated that their party would never give up the fight to liberate Ukraine from nuclear arms and nuclear power plants. They furnished examples of an irreversible mutual dependence between nuclear industry and nuclear arms. According to the Greens, possession of nuclear industry and nuclear arms will fail to strengthen the young state's position in the world community. Quite to the contrary, it will bring Ukraine to her knees.

PZU members believe that if Ukraine makes attempts to preserve and build up its independence by means of nuclear arms, it will be trapped in the net of commitments to the "nuclear club" states and forced into coordinating its political course with these states, as well as building close and burdensome relations with them. The best guarantee of Ukraine's security would be a permanent nonnuclear membership in the UN Security Council.

Ukraine: Environment Ministry Airs Doubts on Chernobyl

*LD0505015093 Kiev UKRINFORM in Ukrainian
0841 GMT 4 May 93*

[UKRINFORM headline: "The Chernobyl Atomic Electric Power Station: The Position of the Ministry of the Environment"]

[Text] The seventh anniversary of the Chernobyl tragedy—the greatest ecological disaster of modern times—has passed. More than 150 of Ukraine's towns and villages, where approximately 3 million citizens reside, have experienced radiation contamination; 40,000 square kilometers of its most fertile land has been affected by radiation. At present, we cannot yet determine the whole scale of the ill-omened influence on the health of present and future generations.

Scorched by Chernobyl's radiation flames, Ukraine has in fact ended up alone with this misfortune today. Work on the national program of eliminating the aftermath of the Chernobyl disaster is going on in extreme conditions of economic and ecological crisis. While healing the wounds inflicted by the "peaceful atom" on people and nature, we should above all do everything so that the tragedy of 26 April 1986 is not repeated on our land, above all in Chernobyl itself.

As is well-known, in October 1991, the Supreme Council of Ukraine resolved definitively to take all active units of

the Chernobyl atomic electric power station out of operation by the end of this year, 1993. Now—in particular, at a high government and parliamentary level—the possibility, and even necessity of the continuing operation of the Chernobyl atomic electric power station units is being discussed and argued.

In connection with this, the Ministry of the Environment considers it necessary to express its point of view on the problem, which worries every citizen of Ukraine.

What arguments are being produced by the apologists and adherents of the cancellation of the said decision of the Supreme Council?

The first argument is that supposedly, when our young state is experiencing a tough economic crisis, suspension of the operation of the Chernobyl atomic electric power station would inflict great economic losses and make difficulties in providing the national economy with electric power more acute.

But let us at last bring order to the Ukraine's energy economy. More than half the power produced here goes on the needs of industrial production. Power consumption in the sphere of industry comprises a disproportionately large part of it. The iron and steel industry alone—with its backward, ecologically dirty technologies and equipment—takes up a quarter of all electric power produced.

The strategic line is clear: we should not chase after the maximum accumulation of electric power production—as a rule at the expense of our children's future—but we should learn how to use the existing, fairly considerable power potential in the most efficient, most economical way.

The second argument of those opposed to taking Chernobyl power units out of operation is that considerable work on increasing the safety level of power units has been carried out at the station in recent years, and an accident of the 1986 type could not be repeated now.

Well, the work has been carried out. But it is well-known: according to evaluations by domestic and foreign experts, that reactors of the RBMK-1000 [RBMK: high-power pressure-tube reactor] type, installed at the Chernobyl atomic electric power station, have basic construction faults, which it is impossible to remove entirely in the operational process. Some of them have not been analyzed yet.

We will not go into technical details, which are only entirely understood by specialists. We state: even after modernization has been carried out, the current safety level of the RBMK is not acceptable from the point of view of international safety regulations, and even the regulations of the former USSR. This is demonstrated by the numerous, so-called "irregular situations," which have occurred at the Chernobyl, Leningrad, Ignalina, Smolensk, and Kursk atomic electric power stations, where RBMK reactors were installed.

In addition, let us recall: power units of the Chernobyl atomic electric power station were in their time constructed in the manner of non-stop work, in a rush,

"outracing the work schedule," and naturally without proper control over the quality of the work being carried out.

So who knows what next "fatal coincidence" awaits possible operators of the Chernobyl atomic electric power station if a decision is adopted on continuing its work?

In the same area as three power units in good working order, the ominous "sarcophagus"—the "cover" [ukrytya] facility—is to be found. How would an entirely possible serious accident affect the unstable equilibrium in the "sarcophagus"?

Specialists note that predetermined criteria for the economic, organizational, and technological acceptability and for the risk of the continuing operation of the Chernobyl atomic electric power station have been absent up to now. This does not make it possible to evaluate unambiguously the economic expediency of continuing to operate the station.

One can only guess at what astronomical economic losses—if only they were just economic—there would be in the event of a new Chernobyl for Kiev Oblast, Kiev, the Dnieper Region, and for Ukraine. And not only for Ukraine. The risk is too great, and those kilowatt hours, which we can receive from the power units of the Chernobyl atomic electric power stations, are not worth it at all.

Now, regarding the issue of social protection and employment of the station's staff. It is thought that significant problems will not arise here. Qualified specialists will long be needed in the 30-kilometer Chernobyl zone. The Academy of Sciences is planning to set up a scientific center here for nuclear reactor safety. Some of the experts would help resolve the problem of staffing the new units of atomic electric power stations with reactors of a different type—if a well-argued decision is adopted on suspending the moratorium on putting them into operation.

Taking into account all that has been set forth above, the Ministry of the Environment of Ukraine views the arguments for the possibility of continuing the operation of the Chernobyl atomic electric power station as insufficient, and considers that the change in the Supreme Council's decision regarding taking the Chernobyl atomic electric power station out of operation is inexpedient.

Press center

Ministry of the Environment of Ukraine

Ukraine: Germany Designs New Sarcophagus for Chernobyl Reactor

LD1205222893 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1700 GMT 12 May 93

[Video report from Germany by correspondent Vladimir Kondratyev—from the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] In Germany, a consortium of six firms, the leaders in their field, has put together a project for a new sarcophagus for the destroyed reactor at Chernobyl. The present one, which was built in just six months and which cost the lives of 200 building workers, turns out to be ageing twice as fast as was planned and will collapse in 7-10 years,

threatening new radioactive emissions. Three hundred competing firms from all over the world are taking part in a contest for the contract.

In the opinion of Ukrainian specialists who visited Heidelberg recently, the German entry stands a good chance of being built. The existing sarcophagus is to be enveloped in a second gigantic external structure 75 meters high, 300 meters long, and 250 meters wide. A special durable concrete will last for several centuries. During the work, reinforced concrete walls are to be set up to protect the workers from irradiation. The cost of the external sarcophagus is 500 million marks, and the same amount will also be needed for the construction of a huge enclosure 40 meters deep to prevent the subsoil diffusion of Chernobyl's radioactive sludge into the Dnepr, from which Kiev draws its drinking water.

The Germans estimate that the whole job will take five years. The Ukrainians are to announce the result of the international competition by summer at the earliest. A great deal of time has already been wasted anyway. It is now necessary to hurry. [video shows archive footage of chernobyl; computer graphics illustrating the planned structure]

CAUCASUS/CENTRAL ASIA

Kazakhstan: Germany To Finance Aral Sea Research Project

LD0705151793 Almaty Kazakh Radio Network in Russian 2300 GMT 6 May 93

[Text] At the National Academy of Sciences, an agreement was signed on an international Aral Sea project. It is to last three years and it envisages scientific research in the Aral zone financed free of charge by Germany. The total cost amounts to 1.3 million German marks. The aim of the project is to create a single model of the changes going on in the ecosystems of the deltas of the Amu-Darya and Syr-Darya in conditions of intensive human activity and also a quest for possible options to save the Aral region. Scientists and specialists from Kazakhstan, Russia, Karakalpakia, and Uzbekistan will take part in carrying out the project, and Turkmenistan also intends to join the work later. Staff from the Institutes of Geography, Zoology, Hydrogeology, and Hydrophysics of the National Academy are being delegated from Kazakhstan. The implementation of the project is under the aegis of UNESCO.

BALTIC STATES

Estonia: Country Used As Transit Route for Illegal Animal Trade

WS2904081493 Tallinn ETA NEWS RELEASE in English 1624 GMT 28 Apr 93

[Text] Tallinn, April 28—Estonia has received criticism over compliance with international environment protection conventions, the chief ecologist of Estonia's Ministry of the Environment, Jaak Tambets, told ETA.

Estonia has joined the Washington convention on protecting rare species in international trade and the Bern convention on protecting rare species and their territories.

Estonia received a letter from the headquarters of the Washington convention that too many lynx skins, reptiles, tortoises and other animals reach Western Europe through Estonia.

Estonia's legislation also need amendments, Tambets said. Several species protected under Bern convention are not rare in Estonia. For example, special reservations are created in Western Europe to protect wolves, but in Estonia, no special licenses are required to shoot them, he added.

The chief adviser to Finland's Ministry of the Environment, Esko Jaakkola, responsible for observing the implementation of Bern and Washington conventions in Estonia, is on a four-day visit to the country.

Estonia's main problem is that it has become a transit route between the former Soviet Union and Western Europe, he said.

Estonia: Environment Minister on Post-Soviet Environmental Problems

PM0405164693 Helsinki HUFVUDSTADSBLADET in Swedish 28 Apr 93 p 8

[Katarina Koivisto report: "No Exact Information About Nuclear Submarines in the Baltic"]

[Text] The Estonian authorities have no direct evidence to show that nuclear-armed Soviet submarines or ships have sunk in the Baltic Sea.

"My statement to the effect that two such submarines have sunk is based on information from Russian environmental activists and the so-called white book on environmental problems in regions which belonged to the former Soviet Union which they have compiled," Estonian Environment Ministry administrative director Rein Ratas said. "We in Estonia have no official information from the Russian authorities."

Originally Germany's DER SPIEGEL published the report on the two nuclear-armed submarines on the seabed of the Baltic. Finnish authorities have remained skeptical toward the report. According to them, there has been no sign of any such submarines in the Baltic.

The problem is, Rein Ratas pointed out, that everything to do with nuclear arms was a military secret and that it is therefore very difficult to get any concrete information about the storing of spent nuclear fuel and other such potential environmental problems with links with military activity.

At a meeting in Helsinki in February this year the Baltic Sea Commission [Ostersjoeckommissionen], Helcom, decided to look into the dumping of chemical warfare gases in the Baltic. If two nuclear-armed submarines have sunk in the Baltic the commission's investigation could discover both of them.

"It is via international organizations like Helcom that we have to go to get concrete information," Estonian Environment Minister Andres Tarand said. The Estonian

authorities themselves have very little information about the sinking of Soviet military submarines or ships.

On the other hand the Estonian authorities know exactly what sort of vessels have sunk in Estonian ports or coastal waters since the war, Rein Ratas said. In Estonian coastal waters there are around 400 sunken vessels. The majority of them sank during World War I or II, but a dangerously large number have sunk in the past few years. Most of these were military.

"For example, last year we experienced what damage a military vessel which has sunk can cause," Ratas said. "Oil began to leak from a vessel which had sunk off the Russian military base at Paldiski—a problem which fortunately is local. Oil leaks are on the whole one of the major problems around the former military bases."

Ratas is convinced that there are sunken submarines with nuclear arms on board in the Baltic and he is also convinced that the Soviet Union dumped other nuclear waste in the Baltic. But he pointed out that here he was speaking as a private person and not as an official representative of Estonia.

"When Russian environmental activists raise the alarm we know that something is wrong," Andres Tarand said. "However, it is very difficult to gain confirmation from official Russian circles."

Another problem with radioactivity in Estonia which threatens the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic is the lake of radioactive waste in Sillamae, in eastern Estonia, very close to the border with Russia. During the era of the Soviet regime uranium, for example, was enriched at Sillamae and all waste was stored in a large basin on the coast. Uranium enrichment ended as long ago as 1989, Tarand said, and now the factory functions as a producer of special metals but is suffering a shortage of raw materials.

Today there is no one who knows what will happen to the radioactive waste which remains and which no one wants to accept responsibility for, Tarand said. It does not represent any immediate threat to the Gulf of Finland, and the basin's walls will also be strengthened over the summer with the assistance of Sweden and Finland so that the risk of leaks is minimized. But Tarand said that he is fully aware that this is not a final solution to the problem.

At Sillamae there are around 400 million tonnes of waste and, according to Finnish and Swedish estimates, they include around 1,800 tonnes of uranium.

In measurements that have been made off Sillamae it has been possible to note a level of radioactivity that is four times higher than the average elsewhere in the Gulf of Finland. Tarand stressed that this radioactivity is not at a level that represents a danger to health, but that small amounts of radioactivity are running out into the Gulf of Finland the whole time, in rain water, for example.

Tarand said that while it is true that Estonia has also raised the Sillamae waste problem in its discussions with the Russian authorities, the withdrawal of Russian troops from Estonia tops the agenda for the talks taking place with Russia.

Latvia: Moscow Urges Riga To Ban Transit of Swiss Toxic Waste

*WS2704114093 Tallinn BNS in English
0908 GMT 27 Apr 93*

[Text] Riga, Apr 26, BNS—Russia urged Latvia to avert the planned transfer of Swiss toxic waste to Russia, Pavils Raudonis, a spokesman for the Latvian Environmental Protection Committee, told BNS Monday.

The Swiss Eco Energy firm and the Latvian Inkomp brokerage plan to transport polygraphic industry waste to Russia.

The waste contains more toxic substances than prescribed in international laws, said representatives of the Russian Ministry for Ecology and Natural Resources.

Russia wants to stop the contract because it breaks the Basel convention on storing and transporting of toxic waste.

The materials would be transported through Riga, where the toxic liquid would be poured into smaller containers to take to Russia.

The Incomp brokerage has worked as a mediator in the contract.

The Latvian Environmental Protection Committee told the Latvian Customs Department and the Riga Regional Environmental Protection Club about the planned waste shipment.

The Riga Club also notified the Greenpeace International Nature Protection Organization.

Latvia: Ozone Layer Over Riga 'Decreasing at a Dangerous Pace'

*PM2704152193 Moscow PRAVDA in Russian
27 Apr 93 p 2*

[Oleg Meshkov report: "Threat from the Sky"]

[Text] Riga—The thickness of the ozone layer over Riga is decreasing at a dangerous pace. Now it is only 3.33 mm as compared with the 4.14 mm norm. The smallest recent reading of the thickness of the ozone layer was recorded 11 April. But a depressing record was entered at the end of January last year—at that time the thickness of the ozone layer was less than 2 mm.

Until now the hole in the ozone layer was far away from Latvia—over Antarctica.

Latvia: Annual 'Baltic Eco' Session Convenes in Riga

*WS1105110693 Riga LETA in English 1426 GMT
10 May 93*

[Text] Riga, May 10 (LETA)—The main objective of the Baltic ecological association "Baltic Eco" is to preserve and improve the environment of the Baltic Sea. An annual session of the association started its work in the Riga journalist house on Monday. Representatives of all the countries of the Baltic region, except Germany, are taking part in the meeting. A review of the association's last year performance, reports by an economic department and secretariat of the association "Baltic Eco", lectures of the

national committees of the members of the association and a vote of a new leadership are issues included in the agenda of the session.

An idea to set up such an organization emerged during a meeting of Swedish and Estonian inventors associations, which took place three years ago, president of "Baltic Eco" Sam Rulson told "LETA". The scientists realized that it was impossible to repair the damage done to the Baltic Sea by industrialization and modern technologies, by one separate country, and it could be done only by joint efforts. According to an estimation by scientists of the association for the nearest two decades an investment totalling to \$20 billion was needed to carry out a convalescence programme of the Baltic Sea and the nearby regions.

Sam Rulson said that his association has drafted about 200 projects aimed at improving ecological situation in the Baltic, including a major project of constructing purification systems in Riga. However, it managed to launch not nearly enough projects due to the lack of money.

The association was prepared to launch "an attack to governments, using a newly-developed platform". To this effect people were needed who would be able to persuade the governments of the Baltic countries of the necessity to invest money in regional environment protection. The association stressed that it should be done not only for the benefit of the present residents of the region, but also for yet unborn generations.

Lithuania: Officials View Radioactive Waste Dumping Problems

*LD2804094393 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in English
2300 GMT 26 Apr 93*

[Passages contained within quotation marks are recorded in Lithuanian, fading to English translation]

[Excerpt] Radioactive waste is increasing at the Ignalina nuclear power plant in northeastern Lithuania. Here is Violeta Karpavicina with the details:

Karpavicina: At the end of last summer the Lithuanian Government passed a decision on building special dumping grounds for nuclear waste. During the 10 years of the existence of the nuclear power plant at Ignalina, 5,000 nuclear cassettes have been used and they are all kept on the territory of the nuclear power plant. The water reservoirs for cooling of the used nuclear cassettes are almost filled to capacity. At the present nuclear power production rates, the cooling reservoirs will only last for one year and a half. I asked senior research worker at the Geological Institute, Mr. Povilas Svezys, whether the nuclear waste reservoirs are not going to become a source of danger. Here's what Mr. Povilas Svezys had to say.

Svezys: "The cooling reservoir is likely to present more problems than the nuclear power plant itself. All nuclear waste that is kept on ground level is a source of radiation. Even if foreigners help us to build a new, more safe nuclear waste reservoir it will still remain a source of radiation. All rich states bury nuclear waste, but Lithuania cannot afford that."

Karpavicina: Most nuclear power plants of the world send waste nuclear cassettes to recycling enterprises in Russia,

France and Great Britain, but that is also a costly affair. Taking into consideration Lithuania's present economic hardships, we can only dream of such luxury. Mr. Runas Bulata is the head engineer at the Ignalina nuclear power plant.

Bulata: "Three companies from the United States, Canada and Germany are taking part in a competition of new nuclear waste storage projects. These firms are the leading ones in that sphere in the world. The Lithuanian Ministry of Power Engineering has signed a contract with a Swedish firm. A special commission is to make a final decision by early July on which foreign firm will be given preference. The expenses for building nuclear waste containers will amount to \$10 million in the first years of construction. That is going to be a very costly thing."

Karpavicius: The Lithuanian Institute of Geology has a special laboratory to study the (?tightness) of nuclear waste depositories. The head of the laboratory, Mr. Jonas Maziuka, says that these studies have been carried on since 1989. In 1991 the laboratory detected tritium in 150-170-meter drill holes near nuclear waste reservoirs. The concentration of tritium exceeded natural levels from 10-10,000 times. That proves that the nuclear waste reservoirs are not hermetic.

Maziuka: "The leakage of tritium is of a local character. The laboratory in (Visiginas), the settlement where the staff of the Ignalina nuclear power plant live, also carries out such investigations. The laboratory is assisted by Swedish experts who help us measure tritium leakages." [passage omitted on Greens Party views]

GERMANY

Minister Reports New Measures to Control Waste Exports

LD2804120593 Hamburg DPA in German 1100 GMT 28 Apr 93

[Text] Bonn (DPA)—The cabinet has today decided on legal stipulations to enforce the international 'Basel Convention' banning illegal cross-border waste exports. After the cabinet meeting, Environment Minister Klaus Toepfer told the media that this will mean that the export of non-reusable waste to countries outside the EC and European Free Trade Area is forbidden. This should prevent this type of waste from getting to countries where the organized disposal of waste is not guaranteed.

Toepfer stressed that a repatriation obligation will be introduced if export attempts fail or are illegal. Those responsible for the waste will take responsibility for repatriating it and will cover the costs involved. In cases where this is not possible, the respective federal states will be made legally responsible. The minister also announced that the export of illegal waste would be made punishable by law within the framework of the planned amendment of the penal code. The punishment could be up to five years' imprisonment. Until now, it has only been seen as an infringement of the law.

German Companies Present Proposal to Make Chernobyl Safe

AU3004120193 Hamburg DIE WELT in German 29 Apr 93 p 3

["gur" report: "A New Coffin for Chernobyl"]

[Text] Frankfurt—Mikhail Umats, the "cleaner" of Chernobyl, and Viktor Baryakhtar, member of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, came to Heidelberg on the seventh anniversary of the Chernobyl reactor disaster, because on this day seven German companies wanted to present their common concept for saving the reactor from a second disaster.

The first assessment of the Russians: What the Germans have prepared is great and has good prospects for being implemented. However, the decision about that will be made only in summer because the "jury" of Russian nuclear experts needs at least two months to look through the proposals from 300 competing teams from all over the world and to evaluate them.

The background is somber, as Umanets (president of Ukratom energoprom, the Ukrainian energy supply giant, to which Chernobyl belongs) explained: In contrast to all assumptions, the concrete sarcophagus, which encloses the disaster reactor, is "ageing" twice as quickly as originally calculated. It is to be expected that the gigantic building will collapse in seven to 10 years.

In order to avert the disaster of another release of radiation, the competition has been tendered, in which a consortium, headed by the Heidelberg Kraftanlagen company, participates. To this consortium the companies Siemens, Hochtief,

Noell (Wuerzburg), Kraft-und Anlagenbau (Berlin-Marzahn), and Nukem belong, as well as the Gesellschaft fuer Nuklearservice (Hanau). The consortium has invested about 1 million German marks [DM] in its project.

According to the German proposal, the sarcophagus, which is threatened with collapse, is to be enclosed in a second gigantic concrete box: 75 meters high, 300 meters long, and 250 meters wide, it is to be made of a special concrete, which survives for centuries. During the period of construction, which is calculated to last about five years, the radiation is to be intercepted by reinforced concrete walls, so that the workers will be harmed as little as possible.

The Russians will never forget how many victims were the price of the construction of the first sarcophagus. Even though construction was concluded after five to six months, it cost the lives of 200 workers. Therefore, the two Russians have high praise for the German safety philosophy.

As the nuclear experts insist, the Chernobyl reactors one to three are to finally closed down by the end of the year. The German side is skeptical whether this will be possible. It has calculated DM500 million for its project of "burying" Chernobyl. Here the Russians are shaking their heads skeptically. "This will cost at least twice as much."

Indeed, the German consortium left one important aspect out of its calculations: the protection of ground water. This does not figure as a cost element. In order to prevent the contaminated water from Chernobyl from flowing into the Dnieper River, from where Kiev gets its drinking water, the Germans want to build a gigantic wall around the nuclear reactor. It must have 40-meter-deep foundations in order to fulfill its purpose. "The costs for that are naturally not included in the DM500 million," Guenter Rump of Heidelberg Kraftanlagen said.

Germany, Hungary Sign New Environmental Accord

LD0905131093 Hamburg DPA in German 1104 GMT 9 May 93

[Embargoed by DPA until 1500 GMT 9 May]

[Text] Bonn/Munich (DPA)—German Environment Minister Klaus Toepfer and his Hungarian counterpart Janos Gyurko signed a new bilateral environmental agreement in Munich today. The Environment Ministry in Bonn said the new accord will replace a treaty signed in 1988 and takes account of the political changes which have occurred since then.

The main focus of future cooperation will be on setting up a modern and efficient administrative and legislative structure for environmental affairs in Hungary. German legal experts provided assistance in drawing up an environmental statute book as well as in the development of statutory clean air regulations. The Ministry said other particularly successful areas of cooperation are waste water and water quality. Proposals were made in collaboration with the German Health Office on ways of improving the quality of water in Lake Balaton [western Hungary].

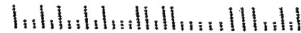
At their meeting, which took place during the "Ifat 93" environmental trade fair in Munich, Toepfer and Gyurko also discussed the controversial Danube barrage weir system at Gabcikovo in Slovakia. Bonn said it will help Hungary conduct surveys into the ecological and hydrological effects of the project.

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